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Foreignness and Selfhood:
Reflections of China in Eighteenth-Century English Literature

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2018

Abstract

The eighteenth century was a transition period between Britain's knowledge of China as mere projection of Chinoiserie values and the development of British sinological studies. It was a historical moment for the exploration and establishment of British attitudes towards China, as well as for Britain's formation of its own identity in a globalizing world order. Reflections of China in eighteenth-century English literature were at once about contemplation of a foreign entity and about ways of holding up a critical mirror to nature, for speculating about culture and politics closer to home. This study aims to make a distinctive contribution to research on Sino-British encounters in the eighteenth century, in its detailed critical and literary analysis of individual texts pertaining to China in this period. It shows the significance of reading these texts not simply as documents of a historical kind, but as texts that are worthy of literary and artistic attention on the basis of their rich variety in genre, style, and themes. Chapter One of this study traces both the social-historical development of tea and representations of tea in literature, since the leaf was first introduced to Britain in the late seventeenth century. Chapter Two looks at Arthur Murphy's adaptation of an original Chinese opera, *The Orphan of China* (1759), and investigates both the play's manipulation of tragic conventions and the way the original Chinese plot is adapted to carry allusions to events happening in eighteenth-century Britain. Chapter Three focuses on Oliver Goldsmith's *The Citizen of the World* (1760-62), a collection of pseudo-letters written by a fictional Chinese visitor in England to his friend in China, and examines the way Goldsmith adopts reverse ethnography in his depiction of Sino-British encounters. Chapter Four studies Thomas Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan* (1761), a text that is based on an original Chinese novel, and analyses Percy's heavy interventions in the text as a reflection of his particular approach to the Chinese theme. Through exploring reflections of China in eighteenth-century English literature, this study invites a rethinking of ideas of foreignness and selfhood. The eighteenth-century authors discussed in this study are among the bold thinkers who – in their various ways – have thought to build bridges between the East and the West. Chinese and British cultures are not antithetical entities; they exist in relation to one another and create possibilities in the continuing appreciation of diversity amidst a drive to universality.

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Statement of Copyright

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Introduction

Eighteenth-century Europe witnessed a widespread cult of Chinoiserie, which both stimulated and was driven by an ever-increasing number of imported objects from China, along with fictionalised perceptions of the East held by many people at the time. Britain in the eighteenth century was a principal site for various forms of encounters with China. Experimental engagement with Chinese literature and culture developed alongside conventional and imaginative redactions of the East, while practical tensions in Sino-British trade and diplomatic relations would eventually lead to the Opium Wars in the following century.[1] The eighteenth century can be regarded as a transition period between Britain's knowledge of China as mere projection of Chinoiserie values and the development of British sinological studies.[2] It was a historical moment for the exploration and establishment of British attitudes towards China, as well as for Britain's formation of its own identity in a globalizing world order. Reflections of China in eighteenth-century English literature were directed both outwardly and inwardly: they were at once about contemplation of a foreign entity and about ways of holding up a critical mirror to nature, for speculating about culture and politics closer to home.[3]

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[1] China's military defeat in the Opium Wars of 1839 to 1842 and 1856 to 1860 forced its rulers to sign treaties opening treaty ports to British merchants.

[2] The term 'sinology' was coined in around 1838. David B. Honey, *Incense at the Altar: Pioneering Sinologists and the Development of Classical Chinese Philology* (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 2001), p. xi. An early definition of 'sinology' appeared in *The Imperial Dictionary of the English Language* in 1882. The dictionary defines 'sinology' as 'the study of things Chinese'. *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://www.oed.com>. In 1876, James Legge became the first Professor of Chinese Language and Literature in Oxford. There had been no Chair in Chinese studies in a British university before Legge, while universities in Paris, Vienna, Berlin, and St. Petersburg already had professors in Chinese by this time. Helen Edith Legge, *James Legge: Missionary and Scholar* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1905), p. 205. Other well-known early British sinologists include John Francis Davis (1795-1890, colonial governor and Chinese scholar), Herbert Giles (1845-1935, professor of Chinese at Cambridge), and William Edward Soothill (1861-1935, Methodist missionary to China and professor of Chinese at Oxford).

Writings about the East in Context

Most writings about the East in eighteenth-century Europe were fanciful owing to the large amount of oriental fables and tales available to readers at the time; many writers invoked a fictional eastern country of their minds and employed their own ideas of the East. Well-known oriental and philosophical tales, such as Samuel Johnson's *Rasselas* (1759) and John Hawkesworth's *Almoran and Hamet* (1761), describe the East without much attention to or interest in accuracy and detail. For instance, in *Rasselas*, the place where the Abyssinian prince Rasselas and his siblings live is cast in a mysterious light by the description of being 'a spacious valley […] surrounded on every side by mountains', of which the only entrance is 'a cavern that passed under a rock'.[4] Yet the reader knows little more about the culture or customs of Abyssinia after reading the story. The tale – like most oriental tales of the period – focuses on the development of the protagonists' knowledge of the world rather than specific knowledge of a culture. The series of adventures taken by Rasselas and his sister in the world outside their palace – the palace filled with a hackneyed presence of luxury, entertainment, and joy – both stimulate their curiosity and ambition, and bring about loss and misery.

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[3] 'English Literature' in this thesis refers to literature written in the English language, rather than to literature written by authors from England. A number of literary figures to be discussed in this thesis are either Irish-born or have associations with Ireland, and the roles played by their Irish identities will be explored in this thesis.

[4] Samuel Johnson, *Rasselas and Other Tales*, *The Yale Edition of the Works of Samuel Johnson (Volume XVI)*, ed. G.J. Kolb (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 8.

Ros Ballaster argues that the oriental tale demonstrates the 'universality of the human mind', and explores the same preoccupations as the realist novels that emerged in Europe in the eighteenth century.[5] For Ballaster, both the oriental tale and the novel are capable of displaying mentalities that resonate with circumstances in real life. She believes that the oriental fable plays an important role in the development of the western world:

> If we started with a sense of the 'backwardness' of the oriental fable for eighteenth-century readers, we should conclude with our own 'reverse ethnography' which recognizes that it could also look forward.[6]

In the oriental tale, the East acts as a kind of analogue to the West because of its assumed difference, namely, its capacity to explain truth in real life by fictional and imaginative means. For example, in Oliver Goldsmith's *Asem, the Man-Hater* (1765), the financially distressed protagonist, Asem, feels resentful of the ingratitude of his friends and acquaintances whom he generously supported when he was affluent. Just when he is going to end his own life in hatred and despair of the world he inhabits, he is spirited by a prophet into a world inhabited by men 'who never do wrong'.[7] However, Asem is disappointed with what he sees in this seemingly ideal world. In order to prohibit the generation of all kinds of vice, there is no art, wisdom or friendship, thus little chance for social intercourse or mutual assistance. At the end of the tale, Asem realizes that his native world, which incorporates a balance of vice and virtue, is better than the purely rational universe designed by the prophet Alla. He therefore goes back to his native town, and works hard to have his fortune soon recovered. In this tale, the central character realizes that elements which provoke countervailing vice and virtue – such as trade, friendship, and luxury – are central to human happiness. Asem is restored to active engagement with his own world – the 'real' world – and his story demonstrates the power of the oriental other to represent cosmopolitan forms of human relationships.

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[5] Ros Ballaster, 'The Lure of the East: The Oriental and Philosophical Tale in Eighteenth-Century England' (Oxford University Podcast), last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://podcasts.ox.ac.uk>.

[6] Ros Ballaster (ed.), *Fables of the East: Selected Tales 1662-1785* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 12.

[7] Oliver Goldsmith, *Asem, the Man-Hater*, *The Life of Oliver Goldsmith, with Selections from His Writings* (vol. II), ed. Washington Irving (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1840), pp. 246-254, at p. 249.

Critical Voices: The Eastern Other in the British Imagination

In *Forging Romantic China*, Peter Kitson generously demarcates the Romantic period to span between c.1760 and c.1840, and suggests that Romantic wildness and irregularity are developed from Chinese landscape gardens.[8] From this example, Kitson argues that the development of British Romanticism bears within itself a global reality, that Britain's forging of its national identity through other cultures, such as Chinese culture, remains under-explored, and that Qing China is crucial to Britain's formation of identity.[9] Kitson focuses on a tendency in British Romantic writings to 'evade or forget China' – an evasion that has also been discussed by critics such as Robert Markley and David Porter – to illustrate that China was for Britain a threat and an aspiration at the same time.[10] One may argue from these claims that an apparent British ignorance of Chinese culture might be more complex than it seems, as the British may have chosen to appear 'ignorant' in cultural encounters with China. Kitson points out a British Romantic paradox regarding China, in which knowledge about China as represented in works written by British writers is at once ubiquitous and indirect. He observes that there were many 'other documents' available about China in the eighteenth century, such as the substantial archive about China formed from two hundred years of Jesuit scholarship, and the numerous first-hand accounts generated by the Macartney and Amherst embassies. Sir George Staunton, who accompanied both Macartney's and Amherst's missions to China, published *An Authentic Account of an Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China* in 1797. John Barrow, comptroller of the Macartney embassy, published *Travels in China* – a first-hand account – in 1804, and remained an influential writer on China of the period.[11] Kitson argues that despite the existence of such historical sources, writers of the British Romantic period persist in the chinoiserie trope of reading China.[12] For example, he suggests that Thomas Manning, a pre-eminent expert on China in the Romantic period, treats China as more of a 'psychological obsession' than 'a field of learning'.[13] The forgetting of the more complex version of China derived from a kind of anxiety on the British side, which was rooted in Britain's pride in its imperial culture and was also the outcome of diplomatic and commercial tensions between these two nations. Just as the British ambassadors resisted the ceremony of kowtowing in the Chinese imperial

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[8] Peter Kitson suggests that Britain was 'forging its own sense of national identity informed by its encounters with other cultures such as China's' of the period. Peter Kitson, *Forging Romantic China: Sino-British Cultural Exchange 1760-1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 3.

[9] The Qing Dynasty ruled China from 1644 to 1912.

[10] Kitson, *Forging Romantic China*, pp. 11, 9. Kitson identifies the 'surprising forgettings,

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avoidances, and evasions of Romantic-period writing when related to Chinese subjects', p. 153.

[11] William Christie, 'China in Early Romantic Periodicals', *European Romantic Review*, 27/1 (2016), 29.

[12] Kitson, *Forging Romantic China*, pp. 153, 169.

[13] Ibid., p. 176.

court, and the nation at once welcomed Chinese imported objects and feared China's growing imperial power, British writers in this period struggled between attraction and uncertainty in their attitudes towards this nation.[14]

Kitson argues that Romantic Sinology witnessed 'a moment of historical watershed […] in which competing views of China begin the uneven process of hardening and homogenizing'.[15] Kitson's statement suggests a degree of stagnation in the development of British understanding of China in the eighteenth century, since 'watershed' and the process of 'hardening and homogenizing' indicate that there was a lack of interaction and thus less scope for informed insights to develop. Such a phenomenon may also encapsulate the various types of literary representations of China in the eighteenth century, in that competing views tended to remain in extremes and did not bring about a fundamentally more effective way to look at the real China.

The fear of eastern influence may indicate a lack of cultural confidence. Indeed, Britain's imperial power is not always treated as definite in the works of eighteenth-century authors. While Horace Walpole's Chinese philosopher in *A Letter from Xo Ho* (1757) views his own belief as superior to that of the British, Thomas Percy attacks Confucianism as a form of idolatry and firmly subordinates it to Christian morality. Both claims of cultural superiority are driven by a lack of real understanding and knowledge of the Other, and the anxiety developed in the face of a different culture can be seen as essentially a form of ignorance.

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[14] The British embassies to China (Macartney and Amherst embassies) and the ceremonies of kowtowing will be discussed in detail in the chapter on Oliver Goldsmith and the Chinese visitors of this thesis.

[15] Ibid., p. 15.

In *British Romantic Writers and the East*, Nigel Leask suggests that, while anxiety can be viewed as a dislocation and blocking of cultural sovereignty for imperial Britain, it also in a way empowers the imperial will: 'if the diseases of the Other strike fear into the heart of metropolitan culture, these therapeutical or assimilative agencies struggle to restore homeostasis, the healthful ease of the Same'. Leask concludes this argument by describing how there was a 'sheer demand for orientalism' in eighteenth-century British culture, as oriental imagery (or imagery of the subjugated enemies) facilitated the appeal of imperial heraldry. Yet the uncertainty in Romantic orientalism means that conquest (whether territorial or cultural) was made at the acknowledgement of great risk: '[the oriental image] is at once *desired* as a heraldic device, but at the same time always tends to shift its meaning from an emblem of symbolic incorporation to one of parasite tenure.'[16]

Britain's imperial anxiety in its relation to the eastern Other finds a unique yet rational interpretation in Raymond Schwab's definition of Romanticism:

> It was logically inevitable that a civilization believing itself unique would find itself drowned in the sum total of civilizations, just as personal boundaries would be swamped by over-flowing mobs and dislocations of the rational. All this together was called Romanticism, and it produced,

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[16] Nigel Leask, *British Romantic Writers and the East: Anxieties of Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). pp. 8-9.

> through its many re-creations of the past, the present that propels us forward.[17]

Cultural anxiety becomes a necessary factor in the historical development of 'the Empire', and oriental culture is treated from the British perspective as inseparable from the cultural progress of Romantic Britain. Although some of the works studied in this thesis do not strictly belong to the Romantic period, they are the product of the years leading up to the conditions that critics such as Schwab state, and already bear similar features in their sentiments and techniques.[18]

Edward Gibbon, the great eighteenth-century historian renowned for his work on the demise of the Roman Empire, recounts his admiration of the honourable lineage of the Chinese Confucian family:

> The family of Confucius is in my opinion the most illustrious in the world. After a painful ascent of eight or ten centuries, our barons and princes of Europe are lost in the darkness of the middle age: but in the vast equality of the Empire of China, the posterity of Confucius has maintained above two thousand two hundred years its peaceful honours and perpetual successions; and the chief of the family is still revered by the sovereign and the people as the living image of the wisest of mankind.[19]

Gibbon compares the relatively shorter life of the prestigious families in Europe with the long history of the line of Confucius, which he describes as 'the noblest upon earth'.[20] In doing so, he not only presents a historical fact about China, but also demonstrates his reverential wonder at a great civilisation. David Porter points out that Gibbon's *Memoirs* (written in the early 1790s) appeared 'at the end of two centuries of sustained European fascination with the great civilization of the Far East'.[21] Perhaps just as Oliver Goldsmith chose China as the origin of his fictional protagonist for its 'being equally advanced in the scale of civilization', China acted as a comparable hold on the consciousness of many Europeans in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[22] The Jesuit portrayals of China can be traced back to as early as 1583, when the first generation of Jesuit priests settled in China, led by figures such as Matteo Ricci and Michele Ruggieri. The Jesuits' accounts cover a wide range of information about China, such as history and geography, language and literature, art and architecture, and politics and commerce. Jean-Baptiste Du Halde's *A Description of the Empire of China* (1738 and 1741) is a notable eighteenth-century collection of such accounts and offered European scholars of the period almost encyclopedic materials about Chinese culture.[23]

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[17] Raymond Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance: Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East, 1680-1880* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), p. 18.

[18] Scholars have defined the exact years covered in the Romantic period differently. The Romantic period is generally seen as spanning the 1780s to the 1820s. In *Forging Romantic China*, Kitson sees the British Romantic period running from 1760 to 1840. For some other European countries, such as France and Germany, the Romantic period comes a little earlier than the 1780s.

[19] Edward Gibbon, *Memoirs of My Life* (New York: Penguin, 1984), p. 42.

Schwab argues that there was an 'Oriental Renaissance' in Europe in the eighteenth century, a cultural phenomenon brought about by the discovery of Eastern literature and ideas, which resulted in a renewal of thoughts and literary culture in

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[20] 'Seventy *authentic* generations have elapsed from that philosopher to the present chief of his posterity.' Gibbon, *Memoirs*, pp. 42-43.

[21] David Porter, *Ideographia: The Chinese Cipher in Early Modern Europe* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), p. 6.

[22] James Prior, *The Life of Oliver Goldsmith, M.B.: From a Variety of Original Sources* (London: John Murray, 1837), Vol. I, p. 360.

[23] Jean-Baptiste Du Halde is a French Jesuit historian on China. He had never travelled to China, but collected and worked on the extensive reports written by the Jesuit missionaries.

Europe.[24] Goldsmith's collection of the Chinese pseudo-letters – *The Citizen of the World* – can be viewed in this context as a work that both offers insight into Chinese culture and customs and provokes British reflection upon their own social conditions. While European preoccupation with Chinese arts and philosophies gradually gave way to an increasing uncertainty regarding Chinese trade policies and the commercialisation of Chinese (and pseudo-Chinese) products, the image of China became more complex and controversial for Europeans. The failure of the Amherst embassy to China in 1816 intensified the problems of Britain's commercial relations with China, and also – in addition to the first British embassy to China (1792-94) – made the British people realize weaknesses lurking in imperial China that proved contrary to their idealised version of this nation. Porter observes that in the eighteenth century 'the prevailing attitude toward China gradually evolved from one of reverential awe to one of increasingly dismissive contempt.'[25] The eighteenth century was therefore a crucial transition period for new ideas about the East to be generated and reconsidered in Europe.

In Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), a foundational text of post-colonial studies, Said observes that the Orient was almost a European construction, and that Orientalism 'has less to do with the Orient than it does with [the Western] world'.[26] Although 'the Orient' in Said's study refers more to the Near East than to the Far East, Said's discussion of the perceived East-West binary opposition in the Western world has provoked discussion among later critics on the question of the role of the East in the formation of the Western self. Leask presents a more open approach to the perceived notion of Orientalism as – in the words of Said – 'a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient'.[27] Instead of seeing the idea of the Orient as fixed and closed, Leask emphasises the instabilities and varieties in how the Orient is represented in British literature.[28] Likewise, in her work on Occidentalism in post-Mao China, Xiaomei Chen focuses on the various contexts and meanings of European representations of China.[29] Looking particularly at the significance of China's relations to the West, various recent critics have commented on the importance of China to the formation of Western modernity. For example, Porter claims that China was central in the construction of global modernity and contributed to the formation of historical cosmopolitanism.[30] Chi-ming Yang argues that China played a key role in balancing British attitudes towards various aspects of its society in the eighteenth century, describing China as at once a symbol of 'imperial excess' and of 'Confucian moderation'.[31] Kitson describes eighteenth-century Britain and China as a 'mirror or inversion' of each other, which highlights the idea of sameness within difference, as objects that are directly opposite ('inversion') become mirror-like and thus mutually enforcing.[32] A number of scholars have also identified the influence of global imperialism on the development of Romanticism. Leask argues that while the production of Romantic literature was in appearance 'a European phenomenon', it was built in the context of 'a burgeoning global imperialism'.[33] In 'The Chinese Origin of A Romanticism', A. O. Lovejoy proposes that the 'irregularity, asymmetry, variety, surprise, an avoidance of that simplicity and unity which render a whole design comprehensible at a glance' in the Chinese garden and some other aspects of Chinese aesthetics are foundational to the origins of Romanticism.[34]

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[24] Schwab, *The Oriental Renaissance*.

[25] Porter, *Ideographia*, p. 7.

[26] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), pp. 1, 12.

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[27] Ibid., p. 3.

[28] 'Whilst Said is right in asserting the links between knowledge of the East and the history of colonial power, he is wrong in denominating it "a closed system"'. Leask, *British Romantic Writers and the East*, p. 2.

[29] Xiaomei Chen, *Occidentalism: A Theory of Counter-Discourse in Post-Mao China* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002).

[30] David Porter, 'Sinicizing Early Modernity: The Imperatives of Historical Cosmopolitanism', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 43 (2010), 299-306.

[31] Chi-ming Yang, *Performing China: Virtue, Commerce, and Orientalism in Eighteenth-Century England 1660-1760* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2010), pp. 4-5, 10.

Critics such as Zhang Longxi and Haun Saussy have argued against the simple divide between the East and the West, calling attention to cross-cultural encounter and the complexity of social and historical reality.[35] Kitson, commenting on the transmission of knowledge about China to Britain in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, argues that the infiltration of non-European knowledge for Europeans was 'never simply a colonial mirror or inversion of the Western self, but neither were they the objective empirical enquiries that they claimed.'[36] Although Kitson concedes that this is not the whole story, he does maintain the idea that Britain and China are 'a colonial mirror or inversion' of one another. Kitson's observation reflects his view of the subtle bond between China and Britain in the Romantic period, in that aspects of China neither wholly changed Britain's imagination of itself, nor were completely detached from the development of British consciousness of the period. Wang Ning emphasises the mutuality between oriental culture and occidental culture, which he believes depend on one another's 'dynamic and creative reception'.[37] Wang also sees the problems and misunderstandings between cultures as necessary to the process of making Chinese culture more accessible globally. Focusing on aesthetics in nineteenth-century Britain, Elizabeth Hope Chang believes that visual forms of Chinese culture, such as its art and design, held 'a familiar yet exotic place in the British visual and literary universe' despite problems in diplomatic and commercial relations between these two countries.[38] Essentially, the complexity and subtlety of China's place in the development of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century British culture has both caught critical attention and provoked ongoing exploration of Sino-British encounters in the period.

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[32] Kitson, *Forging Romantic China*, p. 3.

[33] Leask, *British Romantic Writers and the East*, pp. 11-12.

[34] Arthur O Lovejoy, 'The Chinese Origin of A Romanticism', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 32/1 (1933), 1-20, at p. 3.

[35] Zhang Longxi, *Unexpected Affinities: Reading Across Cultures* (University of Toronto Press, 2007); Haun Saussy, *Great Walls of Discourse and Other Adventures in Cultural China* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

[36] Kitson, *Forging Romantic China*, p. 3.

In his study of Chinese taste in eighteenth-century England, David Porter suggests that the idea of 'Englishness' in the early modern period is 'neither pure nor hybrid in any straightforward sense', as it simultaneously carries appropriation and denial of 'Chineseness'. Porter calls this phenomenon 'instrumental amnesia'.[39] Commenting on China's presence in British culture of the Romantic period, Kitson points out that China was addressed less directly from the 1760s onwards due to

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[37] Wang Ning, *Globalization and Cultural Translation* (London: Marshall Cavendish Academic, 2004), p. 23.

[38] Elizabeth Hope Chang, *Britain's Chinese Eye: Literature, Empire, and Aesthetics in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), p. 3.

[39] David Porter, *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 10.

'Britain's problematic rivalry' in the face of China's global power; this was despite the availability of sources about Chinese culture other than those related to trade and commodities.[40]

Looking more broadly at the concept of the stranger, the juxtaposed sense of fear and desire is evocative of Britain's attitude towards China in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. David Simpson observes that 'stranger' is a historically unstable word, noting its dictionary definition as 'one who has stopped visiting', or who is at once familiar and distant. Simpson argues that 'Europe [...] knows itself only in and through its strangers', which denotes the subtle bond between Europe's human self and the other.[41] Rodolphe Gasché proposes that the idea of Europe is based on 'what is other than Europe', while Jürgen Habermas sees 'modernity' as a step towards cosmopolitan awareness;[42] these two strands of thought jointly demonstrate almost a kind of inevitability of the presence of the outsider in Europe's self-consciousness and development in the modern era.

The Meaning of the Present Study

The very ambiguity of China's position in Britain in the eighteenth century extended its appeal. Increasing numbers of studies on China's relation to Britain in the eighteenth century have been undertaken by scholars up to the present day. Most of these researches pay particular attention to social-historical analysis and the more practical impact brought by China to Britain in the period, such as the connection between imported Chinese goods and British consumerism, the influence of Chinese images on British aestheticism, and more broadly, the development in the reception of Chinese culture in British society. Likewise, while studies have been conducted on representations of China in English writings of the period, they tend to emphasise the function of such writings within the historical context of eighteenth-century Britain – such as how China (or images of China) is adopted to serve the writers' purposes in articulating thoughts about their own society – rather than focusing on literary appraisals of the works.

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[40] Kitson, *Forging Romantic China*, p. 154.

[41] David Simpson, *Romanticism and the Question of the Stranger* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013), pp. 55, 6.

[42] Rodolphe Gasché, *Europe, or the Infinite Task: A Study of a Philosophical Concept* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), p. 27. Jürgen Habermas, *The Divided West*, ed. and trans. Ciaran Cronin (Cambridge, MA: Polity, 2007), p. 63.

The present study seeks to make a distinctive contribution to research on Sino-British encounters in the eighteenth century, in its detailed critical and literary analysis of individual texts pertaining to China in the eighteenth century. Whereas much of this study is concerned with competing (and conflicting) ideas about China, a major part of its investigation has to do with the language and style – even the rhythm – in which various writers articulate those ideas. This study also has a strong interest in genre, and looks at a broad range of types of writing, such as poetry, drama, the novel, memoir, and critical essays. There are also discussions of sub-genres with the categories of poetry (i.e. the mock-heroic and the allegory) and drama (i.e. the tragedy). Discussion will focus on how the styles of the texts are intricately caught up in the authors' world view and perceptions of China. We will explore the way writers adopt both literary devices and themes that were familiar to eighteenth-century English readers – such as the couplets, classical conventions, and rationalist thinking in the Enlightenment – in writings about China.

For this study, literary texts about China are not just documents for research on the culture and history of Sino-British relations. While there are tendencies for both eighteenth-century and modern critics to reduce such literature to the state of mere documents and treat them merely as vehicles for ideas, this study will grant them full acknowledgement as literary works, an accomplishment of the artistic imagination, rather than factual and historical tracts.

The authors and texts chosen for this study are at once diverse and interconnected. As the largest consumer product from China in eighteenth-century Britain, tea provoked both material and literary consumption. Writers on tea and tea-drinking range from social critics such as Jonas Hanway to participants in the British tea trade such as John Ovington, from the poet laureate Nahum Tate to the age's famous tea addict and writer Samuel Johnson. Writings about tea were not only reflections of the product's nationwide influence on British people's material life, but also representations of how this Chinese drink was capable of bringing about cultural participation amongst intellectuals from different fields. Arthur Murphy and Oliver Goldsmith are both Irish-born authors living in England. The Irish identities of these authors provide them with an additional perspective, a kind of medium between different cultures. Murphy's tragedy, *The Orphan of China* (1759), was the first and only English adaptation of an original Chinese opera that was performed on stage in eighteenth-century Britain. The play is also connected to Voltaire's French adaptation of the same Chinese text (musical arias from the original opera were left out in transmission), thus also demonstrating the work's ability to provoke intercultural responses. Goldsmith's collection of pseudo-letters, *The Citizen of the World* (1760-62), represents a typical technique in eighteenth-century fictional writings about China in its use of reverse ethnography. The creation of a Chinese protagonist is influenced by the cult of Chinoiserie prevalent in Europe in the period: while disapproving of material Chinoiserie, Goldsmith seems to be practicing a literary version of Chinoiserie. Thomas Percy, an English bishop who is best known for his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1767), edited the translations of *Hau Kiou Choaan* (1761) – an original Chinese novel – by inserting extensive notes of his own. While Percy's edition of *Hau Kiou Choaan* is special in its engagement with an original piece of Chinese literature, Percy's footnotes in the text are open to debate for their inconsistencies and paradoxes in demonstrating views about China.

Essentially, this study provides a synthesis of approaches to China in eighteenth-century English literature, involving fictional writings pertaining to China, adaptations of Chinese works, and English translations of original Chinese literary texts. It also demonstrates how some of the major literary figures discussed here are frequently found in dialogue with one another. For instance, Goldsmith published reviews both of Hanway's polemics against tea and of Murphy's *The Orphan of China*; the Chinese framework of Goldsmith's text was possibly suggested by Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan*;[43] both Goldsmith and Percy consult Du Halde's *A Description of the Empire of*

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[43] Alda Milner-Barry, 'A Note on the Early Literary Relations of Oliver Goldsmith and Thomas Percy', *The Review of English Studies,* Vol. 2, No. 5 (Jan., 1926), 51-61, at p. 60.

China while taking very different perspectives on the source text. There is something very dynamic about the ways in which aspects of Chinese literature are reflected in English writing, and this is partly demonstrated through the lively debates of views by British writers despite the various styles of their texts.

Where source materials are important in these chapters, this study explores insights into the connection between these materials and the texts in discussion. This approach has not been greatly pursued by previous studies on this topic, but a close reading of the texts is vital in order to acquire more comprehensive knowledge of the literature in discussion. For example, Chapter Two studies both the original Chinese version of *The Orphan of China* and the production's different European adaptations, through which Murphy's English adaptation proves to be distinctive in terms of its allusion to specific national events and circumstances in Britain in the eighteenth century. In his notes in *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Percy frequently refers to Du Halde's source text on China while making his own comments about Chinese customs and culture. In Chapter Four, by comparing Percy's analysis of China with the exact references to Du Halde he claims to have consulted in making his statements, one can easily identify discrepancies between the actual meanings of the source text and Percy's comments; the discrepancies are revealing of Percy's particular approach in his writings about China. Where an original Chinese source text is involved, the author of this study has read the texts in their original language alongside their English adaptations or translations, in order to investigate what has been lost and found in the process of transmission. Although there are a number of well-known Chinese critics on studies of China in eighteenth-century Britain, such as T. C. Fan, Chen Shouyi, and Chi-ming Yang, their works do not focus on the detailed textual materials of the Chinese works, nor the comparison between original and translated versions of these texts. When close reading is not given priority in discussion of writings on China, it is difficult to direct attention to the development of the plot, and thus inevitably reduces a text's literary appeal, which, in turn, narrows the scope of studies on Sino-British encounters in literature.

The Arrangement of the Chapters

The chapters of this study are arranged in chronological order. Chapter One traces both the social-historical development of tea and representations of tea in literature, since the leaf was first introduced to Britain in the late seventeenth century. The chapter looks in detail at a range of texts about tea that belong to various genres. For example, John Ovington's *An Essay upon the Nature and Qualities of Tea* (1699), an important early work providing an account of the origins and attributes of tea, shows both the positive qualities of tea and its limits. Ovington's experience as a chaplain for the East India Company means that he is at once an author of and participant in the subject. Nahum Tate's early poem on tea – *Panacea: a Poem upon Tea: in Two Canto's* [sic] (1700) – exemplifies the category of tea exaltation poems that became increasingly prevalent in Britain in the eighteenth century. The poem at once bears rich classical conventions and alludes to major political events at the time; its mock-heroic style softens controversial responses to tea while nonetheless contributing to the delivery of the poet's message. The literary skirmish between Jonas Hanway and Samuel Johnson over the former's polemic against tea – 'An Essay on Tea' – extends from tea-drinking to wider social and domestic concerns, including consumerism, social class, and gender in eighteenth-century Britain. Oliver Goldsmith's contribution to the Hanway-Johnson debate shows him to be a versatile author in writings on China, which was to be further demonstrated by his involvement in later debates.

James Walvin's work on tea provides useful materials on the history of tea importation into Britain, especially the ways in which smuggling became widely accepted across society due to the high duties imposed on the leaf until the Commutation Act of 1784. Markman Ellis, Richard Coulton, and Matthew Mauger have worked together on an extensive collection of materials related to tea in eighteenth-century Britain, including literary representations of tea, the studies of tea in medical writing and natural history, and discussions of tea in the contexts of commerce and politics. While their collection of works demonstrates a broad scale of research on eighteenth-century sources about tea, Ellis, Coulton, and Mauger do not focus on Sino-British encounters in the context of tea and tea-drinking. Nor do they deliver detailed literary analysis of the texts, as their collection of literary representations of tea serves more to examine portrayals of the drink in the context of politics and society in Britain of the period. David Simpson's study on the question of the stranger, Neil McKendrick's discussion of the significant progress of consumerism in eighteenth-century Britain, and Charlotte Sussman's identification of different forms of importation, all demonstrate a juxtaposition of desire and anxiety towards both material and cultural consumption in Britain in the eighteenth century. The focus of this chapter is on a closely detailed textual analysis of different types of writing pertaining to Chinese tea and its consumption.

Chapter Two looks at Arthur Murphy's adaptation of an original Chinese opera, *The Orphan of China* (1759), and investigates both the play's manipulation of tragic conventions and the way the original Chinese plot is adapted to carry allusions to events happening in eighteenth-century Britain. Differences between Murphy's *The Orphan of China* and Voltaire's *L'Orphelin de la Chine* (1755) – both adapted versions of the original Chinese text – demonstrate how Chinese art and culture are reinvented in specific European contexts. These differences also stimulated correspondence between the two playwrights (Murphy and Voltaire), who debated their principles of adaptation and the literary and artistic merits of their plays. This chapter aims to balance an attention to historical and cultural context with an interpretation of Murphy's adaptation and various textual transmissions. It will also analyse episodes from the play, and discuss how textual details can help to reinforce cultural and inter-cultural significance. The protagonists' struggles between self and society, and conflicts between the private and the public, provoke criticisms of aspects of Confucianism and the idea of extreme allegiance to one's country. This chapter also situates Murphy's play in the context of British theatre in the eighteenth century, and discusses the connection between the staged performance and the meaning of the text.

Chi-ming Yang has identified different versions of China in the performance of *The Orphan of China*: there is the China of the play and the China of mere

Chinoiserie values. Dongshin Chang has studied the representation of China on the British stage from the late seventeenth to the early twentieth century, and focuses on the use of 'Chinaface satire' (a term coined by Chang), a satirical mode deployed to call attention to the British themselves. Both the play's prologue and epilogue are satirically charged, and will be discussed in detail in this chapter. Peter Kitson and Hsin-yun Ou both discuss the play's depiction of traditional Chinese values and ideas, such as the teachings of Confucius and the government of ancient China. While both critics suggest that the tragedy of the play is generated by conventional Chinese notions of dynastic piety, this chapter will argue against this view by drawing evidence from Confucian doctrines that, indeed, emphasise balance and moderation. It also argues for the importance of love in this play – a theme that has not been much explored by previous critics of the work – and proposes that the love between the two protagonists (husband and wife) is central to an understanding of struggles between family loyalty and dynastic allegiance.

Chapter Three focuses on Oliver Goldsmith's *The Citizen of the World* (1760-62), a collection of pseudo-letters written by a fictional Chinese visitor in England to his friend in China. This chapter examines the way Goldsmith adopts reverse ethnography in his depiction of Sino-British encounters. By looking at a selection of his letters, essays, and biographies, this chapter shows the significance of Goldsmith's choice of the Chinese framework, and explores materials related to the origin of *The Citizen of the World* in connection to the author's own experience as a cultural observer. This chapter draws upon a wide range of examples from the text of *The Citizen of the*

World, as it investigates the author's ideas of what makes a world citizen. It also explores how the Chinese protagonist's experience in England reflects upon the ills that lurked within eighteenth-century British society. Alongside the fictional Chinese visitor of Goldsmith's text, the chapter also examines actual Sino-British encounters, including the first two British embassies to China of 1792-94 and 1816 (the Macartney and the Amherst embassies) and a small number of recorded Chinese visitors to Britain in the eighteenth century. A comparison between fictional and historical accounts of Britain's Chinese visitors in the eighteenth century is helpful in evaluating ideas of diversity and inclusion in both literature and society of the time.

Ballaster argues that the fictionality of *The Citizen of the World* makes the text just another piece of Chinoiserie, serving the purpose of its author in attracting the public eye. Kitson similarly observes that literary Chinoiserie is embedded in the material consumption of China. This chapter will develop such views of literary Chinoiserie by considering how these texts made a serious contribution to knowledge of China in eighteenth-century Britain. This idea is countered by critics such as James Watt who argue that one cannot know more about China after reading a text such as *The Citizen of the World*. In the discussion of actual Chinese visitors to Britain in the eighteenth century, this chapter incorporates Kitson's findings to its own analysis of *The Citizen of the World*.

The final chapter studies Thomas Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan; or, The Pleasing History* (1761), a text that is based on an original Chinese novel (*Hau Kiou Choaan*). The translated manuscript was recovered by Percy, the self-proclaimed editor of this work.

Despite Percy's heavy intervention in the text through lengthy footnotes, *Hau Kiou Choaan* provides a wide range of details about Chinese customs and culture. While Percy acknowledges that *Hau Kiou Choaan* possesses more naturalness and probability than most other writings that come from Asia, the Chinese people and their customs tend to be interpreted by Percy as inferior to his own. This chapter will discuss the development of the novel in both British and Chinese literary-historical contexts, a topic not much studied in previous criticisms of Percy and *Hau Kiou Choaan*. This Chinese novel was introduced to Britain amidst controversies over the novel in the eighteenth century. This chapter argues that *Hau Kiou Choaan* explores ideas, attitudes, and values similar to those in some of the best-known English novels of the period, particularly the extent of women's freedom in society and the various forms of restraint imposed on individuals. Acknowledging Percy's laborious industry in his editing of *Hau Kiou Choaan*, the chapter questions the objectivity and accuracy of some of his footnotes with respect to the Chinese characters in the novel and Chinese customs and culture at large. This analysis is chiefly conducted through close reading of selected source texts and episodes from the novel itself. This chapter also looks at Percy's other publication on China, *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese* (1762), which serves to reinforce the claims stated in his edition of *Hau Kiou Choaan*.

A number of critics have focused on the textual aspects of *Hau Kiou Choaan* in their studies of this novel, such as T. C. Fan, L. F. Powell, and Alda Milner-Barry. Although their works were published in the first half of the twentieth century, Fan, Powell and Milner-Barry are important early critics in the scholarship of Percy's

Chinese texts. Some of their arguments have remained helpful to more recent critics in this field, such as Peter Kitson, Chen Shouyi, and Eun Kyung Min. For example, both Fan and Kitson discuss the reasons for Percy's digressions and inconsistencies as editor of the text. While Fan studies the textual variations between the manuscript and Percy's version of the text by arranging selected passages from the same episode side by side, Chen compares Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan* with John Francis Davis's *The Fortunate Union* (a new translation of the same Chinese novel) by similar means. Despite the fact that a good amount of research has been conducted on this novel, most of these studies aim to explore Percy's attitudes towards China and his way of editing the original Chinese novel. This chapter will build on the research of previous critics, but it also directs its attention to the development of the plot and the novel's characterisation, through which one can achieve greater understanding of the values of the Chinese text. Percy's approach to the text reflects the uncertainties, ignorance and paradoxes shared by many of his contemporaries towards a distant eastern country in their process of assimilating new ideas and knowledge.

Chapter One

Food and the Nation: Britain's Chinese Tea

Since the East India Company first imported it commercially into Britain in 1678, Chinese tea gradually established itself as a prominent feature of British domestic and social life.[1] Tea consumption increased enormously in eighteenth-century Britain, and tea became a representative image of British culture. Eighteenth-century writers and critics on various subject areas wrote on the topic of tea: some describe tea-drinking as an activity that soothes the mind and spirit, while others attack the social ills produced by it. The popularity of tea consumption created tensions both within the domestic sphere and in the public space in Britain. Tea functioned as a medium through which the British examined themselves and their own conditions.

Thomas Garway (d. c. 1692), owner of the well-known London coffee-house – Garraways's [sic] – claims that he first publicly sold tea leaves in Britain in 1657:

> The said *Thomas Garway* did purchase a quantity thereof, and first publickly sold the said *Tea* in Leaf and Drink, made according to the directions of the most knowing Merchants and Travellers into those Eastern Countries: And upon knowledge and experience of the said *Garway's* continued care and industry in obtaining the best *Tea*, and making Drink thereof, very many Noblemen, Physitians [sic], Merchants and Gentlemen of Quality have ever since sent to him for the said Leaf, and daily resort to his House in *Exchange Alley* aforesaid to drink the Drink thereof.[2]

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[1] R. Montgomery Martin, *China; Political, Commercial and Social; in an Official Report to Her Majesty's Government* [vol. II] (London: James Madden, 1847).

[2] Thomas Garway, *An Exact Description of the Growth, Quality and Vertues of the Leaf Tea* (London: c.1670), in *Tea and the Tea-Table in Eighteenth-Century England* [vol. II], ed. Markman Ellis

Garway's statement suggests that in the late seventeenth century, tea was a privileged drink for some wealthy consumers ('Noblemen, Physitians, Merchants and Gentlemen of Quality'). In the same piece of writing – which also functions as an advertisement for tea sold in his coffee-house – Garway lists a number of advantages of tea-drinking. For example, tea 'helpeth the Head-ach, giddiness and heaviness thereof', it 'prevents and cures Agues, Surfets and Feavers', and it is 'very good against the Stone and Gravel'.[3] The excellent medicinal qualities of tea leaves as demonstrated by this list are supported by a further list of eight authors who have written in praise of tea from medical, natural historical, and ethnographical perspectives.[4] In addition, Garway's scholarly interest in physic and natural history, alongside his fine knowledge of preparing tea, make his claims of the many advantages of tea-drinking more credible.[5]

Before it became a popular drink across nearly all parts of British society in the first half of the eighteenth century, tea was treated as a prestigious product for the aristocracy and the upper classes. In his *Description*, Garway claims that '[tea] hath been only used as a *Regalia* in high Treatments and Entertainments, and Presents made thereof to Princes and Grandees'.[6] Upon her marriage to King Charles II in 1662, Catherine of Braganza (then princess of Portugal) introduced tea-drinking, a habit

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(London: Pickering & Chatto, 2010), pp. 5-8, and p. 7. Garway was involved in the tea trade since the 1650s, and his coffee-house survived until around the end of the nineteenth century (*Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. II], p. 2).

[3] Ibid., p. 6.

[4] Ibid., p. 7. These authors are medical practitioners, historians and missionaries: Jacob de Bondt (1592-1631), Matteo Ricci (1552-1610), Pierre du Jarric (1566-1617), Manuel de Almeida (1580-1646), Gregor Horst (1578-1636), Alvarez Semeda (or Semedo) (1586-1658), Martino Martini (1614-61), and Alexandre de Rhodes (1591-1660). References are taken from footnote 28 to Garway's *Description*, Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. II], pp. 275-276.

[5] The biographical information is taken from Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. II], p. 2.

[6] Ibid., pp. 6-7.

already common among the Portuguese nobility, to the British court.[7] In 1664, the East India Company presented a gift of their first formal import of tea to Charles II.[8] Garway describes tea as a product 'of such known vertues, that those very Nations so famous for Antiquity, Knowledge and Wisdom, do frequently sell it among themselves for twice its weight in Silver.'[9] Garway's description also asserts the high value of tea leaves in both spiritual and material terms. The leaf, when it was first introduced into Britain, became representative of social distinction and cultural prestige. Tea-socializing first became a vogue among aristocrats, and it was the drink's subsequent connection to the broader social, cultural and political aspects of Britain that brought about its controversy and fame.

Tea-drinking soon became a popular social habit of the British in the eighteenth century. By the 1780s, tea was being consumed by people from all classes and religions in the country, and became part of the daily diet for many families.[10] One can argue that the spread of tea-consumption across social classes was inseparable from the vast development of tea-smuggling throughout much of the eighteenth century. The cost of tea to British consumers was raised by more than a hundred percent of the cost to Asian buyers. The heavy duties on tea imposed by the British government, alongside the rising demand for cheap tea, provoked the smuggling trade. In the face of high duties, consumers worked together with smugglers to drive down the price of tea, and governmental effort to suppress smuggling proved to be ineffective.[11] James Walvin describes tea-smuggling as 'part of that "moral economy"' of eighteenth-century life which pitched customary practice against intrusive and penal government intervention.'[12] At one time, only twenty-five percent of tea to Britain was provided by the East India Company, while the rest was smuggled. In 1784, when the British government reduced the duty on tea from 119 percent to 12.5 percent, the smuggling trade finally came to an end.[13] By this time, tea-drinking had already developed into an important social and cultural trait of the British. Smuggling was instrumental in making tea a much more affordable and widely-consumed product in Britain.

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[7] James Walvin, *Fruits of Empire: Exotic Produce and British Taste, 1660-1800* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1996), p. 14.

[8] Richard Coulton, editor's notes in Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. II], p. 275.

[9] Garway, *Description*, Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table in Eighteenth-Century England* [vol. II], p. 5. Garway mentions that before tea was first sold by him as a retail commodity in England in 1657, the price of tea in England had been very expensive, ranging from six pounds to ten pounds per pound weight. He advertises that 'the said *Thomas Garway* hath *Tea* to sell from sixteen to fifty Shillings the pound' (Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. II], p. 7). In a footnote to this quotation, Richard Coulton points out that Garway's tea, although more reasonably priced than before, was still expensive. Fifty shillings at Garway's time are equivalent to £2.50.

[10] Walvin, *Fruits of Empire*, p. 22.

A significant growth in commercialization in eighteenth-century Britain also encouraged the spread of tea-drinking, as objects which had been previously limited to the reach of wealthy people became increasingly affordable for the many.[14] The significant progress in consumerism of eighteenth-century Britain was reflected in both an increased desire to spend and an increased ability to do so. In *Wages in Eighteenth Century England*, Elizabeth Gilboy observes that wage rates in England increased steadily for much of the eighteenth century, and more rapidly between 1760 and 1780 due to greater demand for labour during the industrialisation process.[15] A stronger average ability to spend, an increasing availability of new commodities, and a long-felt desire of ordinary people to emulate their superiors, made eighteenth-century England the site for what was quickly approaching a consumer revolution. Although consumerism in the England of the eighteenth century by no means reached maturity by modern standards, it marked a significant moment in English consumer history, as certain features of a modern consumer society were first manifesting themselves. Such features include the fast development of trade and commerce, readier acceptance of foreign goods, increased desire to spend and possess on the part of the ordinary people, and the financial ability to pursue new styles of fashion. In a travel book about his visits to England, G. C. Lichtenberg describes England in the 1770s as a place where the luxury of the lower and middling classes had 'risen to such a pitch as never before seen in the world.'[16]

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[11] Walvin suggests that 'smuggling became a way of life, even among the respectable classes.' Walvin, *Fruits of Empire*, p. 19.

[12] Ibid., p. 19.

[13] The Commutation Act of 1784.

[14] Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, J. H. Plumb, *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Europa Publications, 1982), p. 1.

Despite the huge economic benefits, the boom in consumerism brought about significant social tensions within England. The once strict and rigid class distinctions were blurred, as objects of luxury reached down the social scale. In 1767, Nathaniel Forster described a new demand for the pursuit of fashion and novelty:

> In England the several ranks of men slide into each other almost imperceptibly, and a spirit of equality runs through every part of their constitution […] hence arises a strong emulation in all the several stations and conditions to vie with each other and the perpetual restless ambition in each

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[15] E. W. Gilboy, *Wages in Eighteenth Century England* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1934). Quoted in McKendrick et al., *The Birth of a Consumer Society*, p. 23.

[16] G. C. Lichtenberg, *Lichtenberg's Visits to England*, trans. and ed. by M. L. Marc and W. H. Quarrel (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1938), p. 122.

> of the inferior ranks to raise themselves to the level of those immediately above them. In such a state as this fashion must have uncontrolled sway. And a fashionable luxury must spread through it like a contagion.[17]

What was worrying for many eighteenth-century observers was the active striving for the vertical social mobility that was facilitated by consumption of new fashionable goods, such as tea. While Forster describes the fast spread of fashionable luxury across social classes as 'a contagion', many critics of tea, such as Jonas Hanway, look at tea as the facilitator of a nationwide indulgence in luxury. Exotic products imported from outside Britain contributed to consumer tensions within the country. Social emulation and class competition were important issues for figures such as Forster in their polemics against new demands for fashion.

The growing domination of the middle ranks of society in the consumer market, and the desire of the lower social orders to emulate their success, were important elements in raising supplies of tea in the period. Some critics have argued that the narrowing social stratification of eighteenth-century Britain was foundational to the spreading of fashions and emulative spending.[18] In the preface to *Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers* (1751), Henry Fielding identifies the critical impact of trade on society:

> nothing has wrought such an Alteration in this Order of

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[17] Nathaniel Forster, *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Present High Price of Provisions* (London: J. Fletcher, 1767), p. 41. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco>.

[18] Joseph Harris commented in 1757 that England witnessed a 'gradual and easy transition from rank to rank'. Some eighteenth-century social analysts, such as Gregory King and Patrick Colquhoun, observed the great possibility of vertical mobility in the class system of the period in Britain. Joseph Harris, *An Essay upon Money and Coins* (London: G. Hawkins, 1757), pt. I, p. 70. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco>.

> People, as the Introduction of Trade. This hath indeed given a new Face to the whole Nation, hath in a great measure subverted the former State of Affairs, and hath almost totally changed the Manners, Customs, and Habits of the People, more especially of the lower Sort. The Narrowness of the Fortune is changed into Wealth; the Simplicity of their Manners into Craft; their Frugality into Luxury; their Humility into Pride, and their Subjection into Equality.[19]

Fielding's observation indicates that the rapid development of consumerism was, perhaps, the cause of greater social mobility. Fielding seems to claim a reverse order of the influence between consumerism and social structure to what was argued by some other social analysts at the time. However, the juxtaposed – if not entirely opposite – argument on cause and outcome highlights the mutually enforcing relation between trade and social order in eighteenth-century Britain.

Challenges to conventional class hierarchies continued to draw attention from social commentators throughout the eighteenth century. In *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), Adam Smith observes that commerce contributes to a mobile class structure, which for him demonstrates improvement in the country:

> commerce and manufactures gradually introduced order and good government, and with them, the liberty and security of individuals, among the inhabitants of the country, who had before lived almost in a continual state of war with their neighbours and of servile dependency upon their superiors. This, though it has been the least observed,

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[19] Henry Fielding, *An Enquiry into the Causes of the Late Increase of Robbers* (Dublin: G Faulkner, 1751), p. xi. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco>.

> is by far the most important of all their effects.[20]

The Wealth of Nations is Smith's masterpiece and remains a fundamental work in classical economics. Although argument and observations made in this work do not focus on a particular country, it explores and reflects upon the economics of societies at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. In the same work, Smith argues that there is not much difference in the nature of people, regardless of their class and background:

> The difference of natural talents in different men is, in reality, much less than we are aware of; and the very different genius which appears to distinguish men of different professions, when grown up to maturity, is not upon many occasions so much the cause as the effect of the division of labour. The difference between the most dissimilar characters, between a philosopher and a common street porter, for example, seems to arise not so much from nature as from habit, custom, and education.[21]

Smith claims that differences in individual productivity were the effect of different opportunities (the 'division of labour'), and essentially, all men were equal in abilities to begin with. Tea was introduced to Britain at a point when the country had achieved a global trading presence and at an early stage of modern industrialisation. Industrialisation and urban growth in Britain played a central role in the development of trade. At the same time, conventional attitudes towards consumerism and class boundaries in the face of change provoked excitement and fear.

Alongside the growing consumption of tea in eighteenth-century Britain, discourses on tea also developed in various forms. Tea-drinking not only became a subject for debate among figures such as philosophers, moralists and political economists, but also attracted the attention of poets, essayists and medical authors. This foreign drink prompted commentary and reflection from social observers, for it was consumed not only physically, but also culturally and politically.

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[20] Adam Smith, *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), Book III, Chapter iv, p. 260.

[21] Ibid., Book I, Chapter ii, pp. 23-24.

John Ovington's *An Essay upon the Nature and Qualities of Tea* (1699) is an early and important work in Britain that provides a detailed account of the origins and attributes of tea. Ovington was first introduced to tea by a Chinese ambassador and local merchants during his mission as chaplain of the East India Company's factory at Surat between 1690 and 1693.[22] Although Ovington himself never went to China, his first-hand experience of people who were involved in the tea trade made it possible for him to produce a relatively comprehensive study of tea. The essay is written as a whole piece; on the frontispiece the author lists five sections he is to discuss in the order they appear, which include the origins, growing and preserving methods, and virtues of tea.[23] These topics are approached in ways that are both professionally and medicinally informed, and morally and philosophically charged. In the dedication of this essay – which is addressed to the Countess of Grantham – Ovington states that the Countess's 'innate Goodness' and 'Eminen[ce]' are enough to recommend the healthful tea leaf that is 'both Pleasant and Medicinal' (p. 21). While the dedication reflects Ovington's praise and appreciation of tea-drinking – a custom described by him as 'Universal' – there might be multiple reasons for his intentions in writing this essay. Richard Coulton points out that before the publication of this essay, Ovington received £25 from the East India Company for writing his autobiographical *Voyage to Suratt in the Year 1689* (London: J. Tonson, 1696). Coulton suggests that the writing of *An Essay upon the Nature and Qualities of Tea* might be partly driven by financial motivations as Ovington works to stimulate a fashionable commodity of the East India Company and encourage the increasingly popular British tea-habit.[24] In addition, the young and beautiful Countess of Grantham was well known for her forward-thinking taste in oriental fashion, and was thus a desirable figure to support Ovington's praise of tea.[25]

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[22] Markman Ellis, Richard Coulton, Matthew Mauger, *Empire of Tea: The Asian Leaf That Conquered the World* (London: Reaktion Books, 2015), p. 74.

[23] 'I. The Soil and Climate where it grows; II. The various Kinds of it; III. The Rules for Chusing [sic] what is best; IV. The Means of Preserving it; V. The several Virtues for which it is fam'd.', John Ovington, *An Essay upon the Nature and Qualities of Tea*, in Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. II], p. 19. All subsequent references to this essay will appear in-text.

As a chaplain who had been on board the East India Company's ship, Ovington might also have wished to recommend tea-based moderation.[26] In the dedication, he states that consumption of tea has quickly made people find that 'Men might be chearful [sic] with Sobriety, and witty without the Danger of losing their Senses (p. 21).' In contrast, wine is here described as 'a pernicious Excess of inflaming Liquors' that might cause serious diseases (p. 21). In the main text of the essay, Ovington restates the virtues of tea over wine:

> The last Remark which I shall make of this innocent lovely Liquor, is the Advantage which it has over Wine, and the Ascendant which it gains over the powerful Juice of the

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[24] Richard Coulton, Introduction to *An Essay upon the Nature and Qualities of Tea*, in Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. II], p. 17.

[25] Ellis et al., *Empire of Tea*, p. 76.

[26] On 11 April 1689, Ovington took his position as the East India Company's chaplain on board the *Benjamin*, ultimately arriving at Surat in late September.

> Grape, which so frequently betrays Men into so much Mischief, and so many Follies. (p. 28)

Tea comforts the brain and soothes the mind, and the leaf also carries various medicinal benefits. For example, tea guards against the gout and stone, cures vertigo, and helps with digestion (pp. 26-28). Towards the end of the essay, Ovington maintains that such medicinal benefits of tea are not unfounded claims: 'the several Virtues which are here ascrib'd to this delicate Leaf are not meerly [sic] Notional, or of bare Conjecture, the Testimonies of several eminent Authors might be produced' (p. 29). This statement is followed by two long paragraphs of references to medicinal authors and their works (pp. 29-30).

An Essay upon the Nature and Qualities of Tea provides a relatively objective account of the origins and attributes of tea. Unlike many other writers on this topic, who either provide purely mythological representations of tea and China, or dismiss their merits altogether, Ovington at once introduces a wide range of virtues of tea and identifies difficulties in Britain's encounter with tea. For instance, Ovington points out that the Chinese are very protective of the seed of tea 'lest it should be planted any-where else' (p. 23), and that one needs to be capable of differentiating good tea leaves from bad ones to avoid 'Cheats and Frauds' in the trade (p. 25). As a result, the author does not bypass difficulties surrounding certain aspects of tea, such as its importation and values; he presents both positive and negative qualities of tea with evidence. In the last section of this essay, the author answers a few objections to tea-drinking, which helps explain uncertainties and doubts about this product. The essay concludes with a few conditional statements about the virtues of tea:

> And yet after all, though these rare and excellent Qualities have long been observable in *Tea*, yet must we not imagine that they always meet with the same Effect indifferently in all Persons, or that they universally prevail. For either the *Height* of a Distemper, or the long *Continuance* of it; either the *Constitution* of the Person, or some certain *occult / Indisposition* may avert the Efficacy, and obstruct or delay the desir'd Success. It may either be drunk without *Advice*, or at *unreasonable Times*; either the *Water*, or the *Tea*, may be bad; and if the *Physick* itself be sickly, we cannot easily expect much *Health* by it. (p. 31)

In the essay's conclusion, Ovington proposes the benefits of tea-drinking while acknowledging conditions where tea might fail to bring satisfaction. In *Empire of Tea*, Markman Ellis, Richard Coulton and Matthew Mauger observe that:

> For Ovington, tea itself is civilized and civilizing: there is nothing barbarous or corrupting about its approach to the British palate. This chimes with the wider 'discovery' of Chinese civilization in European philosophy and history in the late seventeenth century.[27]

The importation and consumption of tea permeates not only the realms of trade and domesticity, but also the realms of civilisation and culture. Ovington's precautious yet positive account of tea-drinking reinforces the reliability of the author's work. The way Ovington makes his argument subject to certain conditions might be partly owing to his experience and encounters while he was on the mission of the East India Company in 1689. The relative objectivity of Ovington's presentation, alongside the balance he seeks between positive and negative perspectives, are qualities that might seem commonplace but are much valued and needed in eighteenth-century English writings on China.

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[27] Ellis et al., *Empire of Tea*, p. 77.

Nahum Tate, a good friend of Ovington's, composed one of the earliest and most influential of the tea exaltation poems popular in the first decades of the eighteenth century.[28] Tate, a poet and playwright, was born in Ireland and became England's poet laureate in 1692.[29] *Panacea: a Poem upon Tea: in Two Canto's* [sic] was first published in 1700, and presents itself as a relaxed mock-heroic poem.[30] Similar to Ovington's essay on tea, Tate's composition of the poem might have been partly driven by the spreading commercial interest in tea. Tate had already composed commendatory verses to Ovington's *Voyage to Suratt* in 1696, and some critics suggest that both Ovington and his patrons in the East India Company would have encouraged Tate's production of verses about tea.[31] Tate's long poem is, however, also politically and mythologically charged. While the mock-epic portrayal of war against the Chinese emperor suggests a thinly veiled allegorical treatment of the English Civil War and the revolution of 1688, the cataloguing and calling upon gods and goddesses bears classical conventions.

Panacea has an extensive paratextual arrangement. The poem consists of a dedication to the Whig politician and poet, Charles Montague, a preface reflecting on the author's method of writing, two dedicatory poems addressed to Tate, the introduction, the main section comprising the two cantos, a concluding poem entitled 'The Tea-Table', and a postscript.[32] Markman Ellis points out that in the first edition of this poem, pages are numbered only for the two cantos, and therefore suggests that the other material is relatively supplemental.[33] While the main part of the poem (i.e. Canto I and II) presents complete and scenic stories about tea (and China) by adopting poetic conventions such as the pastoral, the epic literature of war and warfare, and deities of classical antiquity, the supplementary materials help reinforce the poem's experiment in the mock-heroic as the central motifs unfold.[34]

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[28] Ibid., p. 79.

[29] Tate (c. 1652 – 1715) was appointed to the poet laureateship by William III on 8 December 1692 after the death of his predecessor Thomas Shadwell. Tate held this position for life. David Hopkins, 'Nahum Tate', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://www.oxforddnb.com>.

[30] Although the first edition of *Panacea* is dated 1700 on the title page, scholars have suggested that the work was actually published in 1701, based on evidence such as advertisements in the newspapers and a periodical of 1701. Markman Ellis, Introduction to *Panacea*, Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. I], p. 1.

[31] Ellis et al., *Empire of Tea*, p. 79.

Despite the light-hearted tone of much of the two cantos, the poem also carries a serious set of political and social concerns. In the dedication to the poem, Tate claims that 'the greatest Genius for Poetry, can be as Eminent in / Business of State, and Affairs of the Publick (p. 7).' The poet proposes the interconnection between art and society, which will be further enforced through his discourses on tea. Likewise, in the first dedicatory poem addressed to Tate – 'On our English *Poetry, and this Poem upon* TEA' – the speaker describes Tate as combining 'Wit, Fancy, [and] Judgment' (p. 9); it is the juxtaposition of powerful imagination and logical thinking that makes the poem at once entertaining and reflective. In the preface, Tate acknowledges that

> 'Twas but lately that the Fortune of *Europe* depended upon

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[32] The two dedicatory poems addressed to Tate are written by 'R.B' and 'T.W.' respectively; both authors are untraced. Nahum Tate, *Panacea: a Poem upon Tea* (London: printed by and for J. Roberts, 1700), in Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. I], pp. 5-28, at p. 9. All subsequent references to this poem will appear in-text.

[33] Ellis, Introduction to *Panacea*, Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. I], p. 2.

[34] The use of paratextual elements was not rare in eighteenth-century literature and sometimes can carry mock-intellectual purposes.

> the Welfare of *England*; when *England* her Self was under the most perplexing Exigencies, by the ill Condition of our Coin, Deficiency of Funds, Loss of Publick Credit […] with other Afflicting Circumstances that threatened our very Constitution, and made our Affairs seem Desperate. (p. 7)

The statement implies the significant problems with the supply of coinage and currency in Britain in the late seventeenth century, which lasted into the eighteenth century.[35] In the context of the tea trade, the offences to the silver coin – such as clipping and counterfeiting – would have worsened existing troubles with the British currency, as Chinese traders required silver in return for the tea leaves.[36] In addition, the poem's dedication to Charles Montague may be seen as both the reason for and reinforcement of Tate's statement of the interconnection between literature and society, an indication of his support of liberal ideals, and the poem's reflection of Whig political concerns at the time.[37] As Chancellor of the Exchequer between 1694 and 1699, Montague was involved in the Great Recoinage of 1696 and the settling of the East India trade.[38] He can therefore be seen as a public figure who had better knowledge and insight into Britain's importation of tea.

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[35] The disarray of English currency, particularly the coining offences, led to the Great Recoinage of 1696. More details can be consulted at 'Currency, Coinage and the Cost of Living', *Old Bailey Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <https://www.oldbaileyonline.org/static/Coinage.jsp>.

[36] The shortage of silver in Britain to pay for tea import eventually forced Britain to sell opium to China in compensation for the loss. The East India Company grew opium in India and was involved in smuggling it to China. Opium became a form of exchange that the Chinese would accept instead of silver. The vast destruction brought by opium consumption to China, alongside the trade tensions between China and Britain, eventually led to the Opium War in 1839. More details can be consulted at 'Opium and the Expansion of Trade', *The British Library (Online)*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/trading/story/trade/4tradingplaces.html>.

[37] Tate was from an Irish background. His family (father and grandfather) was ill-treated in the Irish Catholic uprising of 1641. Partly influenced by this history, Tate found James II's pro-Catholic policies offensive. At the Glorious Revolution, Tate turned his allegiance to William III, whom he perceived as a protector of English liberty. D. Hopkins, 'Nahum Tate', *ODNB*.

[38] Stuart Handley, 'Charles Montagu, Earl of Halifax', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://www.oxforddnb.com>.

In their study of the exaltation of tea in *Panacea*, Ellis, Coulton and Mauger argue that Tate's adoption of a piece of Chinese history in Canto I goes beyond mere ornament: 'the canto celebrates tea as the Whig national champion, appropriate to the Whig ideology of polite and congenial virtue.'[39] Even though the first canto appears light-hearted, its depiction of social and political turbulence under the rule of the semi-mythological Chinese emperor King Jie reflects recent tensions in domestic politics in Britain. From the Introduction to the poem, tea is depicted as carrying significant political importance. There is a reflection on the benefits of tea not just for the individual, but for the nation as a whole. At the opening of the Introduction, the speaker invites 'all Ranks of Mortals' to drink tea, as

> Etherial TEA your Notions will refine,
> Till you your selves become almost Divine. (p. 10)

Right from the outset of this poem, tea is presented as an inspiring drink that elevates the mind and spirit. The Introduction goes on to recommend tea to people of a range of professions: statesmen, lawyers ('Pleaders'), artists, natural philosophers and scientists ('Curious Souls'), scholars ('You that to Isis's Bank, or Cam retreat'), musicians ('Musicks Sons'), and painters ('Sons of Apelles') (pp. 10-11). One stanza is dedicated to each of these professions, where tea is presented as calming, inspiring, and elevating the performance of such intellectually inclined professionals. The sense of connection between tea and the nation culminates in the concluding rhyming couplet of the Introduction, where tea is described as empowering heroic actions:

> Drink, drink Inspiring TEA, and boldly draw,

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[39] Ellis et al., *Empire of Tea*, p. 82.

A Hercules, a Mars, or a NASSAU. (p. 11)

Hercules is a celebrated god-hero of Greek and Roman mythology and is represented as possessing prodigious strength, while Mars is the Roman god of war.[40] Nassau refers to King William III of England, who was a member of the House of Orange-Nassau of the Netherlands. William III reigned over England, Ireland and Scotland from 1689 until his death in 1702, and he was hailed by Tate as a peacemaker and defender of English liberty.[41] The allusion to William III not only implies the poet's own political inclinations, but also allows the poem to partly reflect upon contemporary events – amidst its encounters with the ancient and mythological worlds.

The division between mythology and reality is here blurred by heroic actions shared by these three figures. Although no object comes after 'draw' in the first line of the couplet, it is reasonable to assume that the speaker is here suggesting the drawing of the sword, given the war-inclined figures that appear in the following line. The association made between tea and heroes contains a double-edged perspective. While it reflects an aspiration to power and liberty, it is slightly ironic in that tea – which is calming and soothing – is linked to figures of war and warfare. Such juxtaposed treatment reappears in Canto II, where the gods and goddesses argue among themselves about who should have the right to be the patron of tea. The irony contributes to the mock-heroic tone of the poem. When the reader looks beneath the ironic surface, tea's calming effect is not entirely contrary to images of warfare, in that disagreements within this poem end in peace and congruence.

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[40] *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://www.oed.com>. Note to 'Hercules…Mars…NASSAU', *Panacea*, Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. I], p. 235.

[41] Hopkins, 'Nahum Tate', *ODNB*.

The speaker of the first canto is Palaemon, who is a young sea-god in Greek mythology and a shepherd in Virgil's pastorals.[42] The opening of the canto describes Palaemon coming back to his native land full of praise for the Chinese after travelling around the world:

> But none he found, his gentle Soul to please,
> Like the Refin'd and Civiliz'd *Chinese*. (p. 12)

Tea soon comes to the foreground as Palaemon shows his friends '*Eastern* Rarities', among which tea causes the greatest wonder:

> Yet, more surpriz'd, they found their Senses chear'd,
> Soon as the Verdant fragrant *TEA* appear'd. (p. 12)

In the first of the two couplets above, 'please' is paired with 'Chinese', which forms a nice rhyme to highlight the speaker's (Palaemon's) affection for the distant country (China). In the second couplet above, 'chear'd' is paired with 'appear'd' to heighten tea's power in lifting the spirit. The couplet verse – for which Tate was renowned – runs throughout the poem, and the usage of rhyming couplets at once enhances the vivacity and casts a shade of humour to the mode of this poem.[43] Facing his guests' questions about the origins and the nature of tea, Palaemon guides them to his own 'Bow'r', where tea is being prepared (p. 12):

> On burning Lamps a Silver Vessel plac'd,
> A Table with surprising Figures grac'd,
> And China-Bowls to feast their Sight and Tast [sic]:
> The Genial Liquor, decently pour'd out,
> To the admiring Guests is dealt about. (p. 13)

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[42] Due to the usage by Virgil, Palaemon has been a conventional name for a poetical shepherd in pastorals. Note to 'Palaemon', *Panacea*, p. 235.

[43] The fact that some of Tate's couplet verse achieves genuine distinction is taken from Hopkins, 'Nahum Tate', *ODNB*.

Words such as ‘Silver’, ‘grac’d’ and ‘feast’ suggest the material splendour of the tea-table, while ‘genial’ and ‘decently’ imply the spiritual virtues associated with tea. Palaemon emphasises that tea’s spiritual and moral benefits do not stand at the expense of side (or ill) effects. For instance, the wonders of tea are not the outcome of witchcraft:

> Then thus the Bard – Fear no *Circaean* Bowls,
> This is the Drink of Health, the Drink of Souls! (p. 13)

‘Circaean Bowls’ here alludes to a drink (or drug) prepared by Circe the enchantress.[44] Palaemon suggests here that tea is not poisoned, but is a genuine drink that brings benefit to the body and the soul. By referring to Bacchus, the god of wine, the bard (Palaemon) also notes the contrast between tea and wine: while wine causes ‘Syren-Pleasure, to Destruction turn’d’, tea is ‘not such the Plant which *Bacchus* first did nurse’ (p. 13).[45] *Panacea* is a poem that models itself upon pastoral and classical conventions, and references and allusions to such conventions run throughout the text. One can argue that by adopting such conventions – which were familiar to eighteenth-century British readers – the poet can more easily communicate his views of a foreign culture.

The grand mode of the description of Palaemon’s tea-table resonates with the depiction of Belinda’s dressing table in Alexander Pope’s *The Rape of the Lock*:

> And now, unveiled, the toilet stands displayed,
> Each silver vase in mystic order laid.
> […]
> Unnumbered treasures ope at once, and here
> The various offerings of the world appear;
> […]
> This casket India’s glowing gems unlocks,

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[44] Note to ‘Circaean Bowls’, *Panacea*, p. 235.
[45] Bacchus is the Roman god of drinking and the grapevine. Note to ‘Bacchus’, *Panacea*, p. 235.

And all Arabia breathes from yonder box.
The tortoise here and elephant unite,
Transformed to combs, the speckled and the white.
Here files of pins extend their shining rows,
Puffs, powders, patches, Bibles, billet-doux.[46]

In the letter to Mrs Arabella Fermor at the opening of Pope's poem, the poet claims that 'the ancient poets are in one respect like many modern ladies: let an action be never so trivial in itself, they always make it appear of the utmost importance' (Letter). Tate is a poet who showed great interest in classical literature. He produced versions from Ovid's *Heroides* for *Ovid's Epistles* (1680) and was interested in Ovidian translations.[47] The epic narrative in *Metamorphoses* – a poem Tate had worked on in translation – may be seen as an early influence on Tate's own composition of the epic (or mock-epic) poem. Both *The Rape of the Lock* and *Panacea* abound in paradoxes and echoes of the older poetic and heroic norms. The ritualized presentation of the exotic and sparkling commodities is beautifully proportioned to the mock-epic scale. One can argue that by comparing trivial things with the great, the poets are adopting a light-hearted tone that may ease the introduction of materials bound to be controversial. It therefore softens potential controversy and makes it more palatable to the readers. In the case of *Panacea*, the controversies lie between the calming virtues of tea-drinking and its possible disruption to the conventional order of society.

After showing the guests around his tea-table, Palaemon begs his audience's patience while he begins a tale about how tea is first introduced to the ancient Chinese:

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[46] Alexander Pope, *The Rape of the Lock*, Canto I. ll. 121-22, 129-30, 133-38, in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* [vol. I], ed. Stephen Greenblatt (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2006), pp. 2513-31. Subsequent references to this poem will appear in-text.

[47] For example, Tate translated versions from Book Seven of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Hopkins, 'Nahum Tate', *ODNB*.

TEA was not sprung – reserv'd by friendly Fate,
For last Distress of *China*'s suff'ring State.
Whose Griefs and wondrous Cure I shall recite,
A Tale that may your Patience well requite. (p. 13)

Tea, as described in the two couplets above, is linked to the fate of China: it is reserved for China to ease the country through its political distresses. Palaemon's tale presents Ki (King Jie) and his wasteful life in his palace. King Jie is a semi-mythological emperor of the Xia Dynasty (2100 – 1600 BC), the first dynasty of China. He is renowned for his dissipation and autocratic rule. It is believed that Tate's knowledge of Ki is derived from the Jesuit missionary Louis Le Comte, whose writings on China present the first European source of Ki.[48] The hedonism of the monarch has not only changed 'The Government into a *Farce*', but also spread across the country like 'Contagion' (p. 14).[49] The emperor and his companions 'Bathe in Pools of Wine', spend all of their time on 'Banquets, Musick, Masques and Mimick Sport', and in the end, have even constructed a palace of pleasure (pp. 14-17).[50] Ki's licentious lifestyle and despotic governance provoke revolution, and the army eventually overthrows Ki's rule and reforms the state. The seeming digression from tea to Ki's tale carries allusion to political circumstances in Britain near to Tate's own lifetime. The description of Ki draws analogies between the history of China and of Britain. The poem was written only a few decades after the English Civil War, when the monarch was overthrown by the Parliamentarians for his perceived weakness and corruption.[51] Charles I's clash with the Puritans might also have drawn the poet's attention and disapproval, given that both Tate's father and grandfather were clergymen of puritan sympathies.[52] The story of Ki also bears resemblance to the Glorious Revolution. Ellis, Coulton and Mauger suggest that Tate's account of 'the overthrow of a royal ruler given over to riot and debauchery at court was strongly reminiscent of the Revolution of 1688, in which James II was deposed by William and Mary.'[53] These critics also argue that the poet's presentation of the rebellion against Ki recalls 'the Whig apologists for the revolution, who wanted both to justify their overthrow of a reigning monarch and to legitimate the resulting political settlement.'[54] Thus the act of rebellion and the restoration of peace depicted in the lengthy tale of Ki carries more significance in its veiled analogies than, perhaps, in the semi-mythological tale of the Chinese emperor itself.

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[48] Louis-Daniel Le Comte, *Memoirs and Observations [of] the Empire of China* (London, 1697), mentioned in Ellis et al., *Empire of Tea*, p. 81. Also in note to 'KI', *Panacea*, p. 235.

[49] This soft Contagion, in the Palace bred,
From Court to Town, from Town to Country spred. (p. 14)

[50] The detail about Ki's construction of a pleasure palace for him and his concubines is mentioned in Le Comte's account. Ellis et al., *Empire of Tea*, p. 81.

In Canto I, the historical part of Ki's tale ends with the restoration of the state under a new monarch appointed by the advisors:

> The conscious Prince from Empire thus retir'd,
> And all besides of Royal Race expir'd,
> The *Mandarins* assemble, to create
> A Monarch, to Reform and Rule the State.[55] (p. 17)

The canto continues with an imaginary account of the poet. The new monarch of China goes to visit Confucius, wishing to alleviate the pain that was inflicted on the state during the revolution. The sage presents a gift of tea to his visitors, and offers it as a cure to the health of the nation:

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[51] Mark A. Kishlansky and John Morrill, 'Charles I', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://www.oxforddnb.com>.

[52] Kishlansky and Morrill, 'Charles I', *ODNB*; Hopkins, 'Nahum Tate', *ODNB*.

[53] Ellis et al., *Empire of Tea*, pp. 81-82.

[54] Ibid., p. 82.

[55] King Jie is the last emperor of the Chinese Xia Dynasty.

> There bloom'd the *SOUMBLO*, there Imperial *TEA*,
> (Names then unknown) and Sanative *BOHE*;
> All deem'd, in Honour to the Prophet's Shrine,
> Produc'd with Virtue, like their Birth, Divine,
> And sent a timely Cure of Publick Grief;
> Experience soon Confirming that Belief. (pp. 18-19)

The rhyming couplets help to articulate the underlying meaning of the text. Tea, which is presented at Confucius's 'Shrine' (domain), is made to be inspired by things 'Divine'. And the nation's 'Grief' is removed by the experience of and 'Belief' in tea's healing power.

It is worth noticing that the encounter with Confucius by the monarch following King Jie is an anachronistic arrangement. In history, Confucius (551 – 479 BC) was born more than 1000 years after the death of King Jie (1728 – 1675 BC). It is unclear whether such anachronism was intentional on Tate's part. It is probable that Confucius was more often perceived as a symbol of Chinese ideals beyond historical confinement, especially at a time when concrete knowledge about China was not yet widespread.[56] Nonetheless, the encounter of future and past through the poet's imaginary account here may be seen to suggest that the way forward might well be found in tea, which – as the title of this poem suggests – is a universal panacea.

Canto I ends on an auspicious note, depicting the visit of the Chinese court to Confucius's domain and the sage's presentation of the restorative gift of tea. In

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[56] The publication of Jean-Baptiste Du Halde's *A Description of the Empire of China and of Chinese Tartary* in 1738 was one of the earliest systematic accounts of China available for European readers, and Du Halde's work was consulted by many European writers on China. This will be discussed in detail in the following chapters of the thesis.

Canto II, the interplay of peace and war continues, although in a very different sphere, as gods and goddesses from Greek and Roman mythologies assemble to compete as to who should be the patron of tea:

> WHen first *Apollo*, in Celestial Bow'rs,
> Treated with fragrant *Tea*, th'immortal Pow'rs,
> (That more than *Nectar* and *Nepenthe* pleas'd)
> The Goddesses with such Delight were seiz'd,
> They fell to Strife about the foreign Tree,
> Who should its Patroness and Guardian be:
> At last the Competition was referr'd
> To be before the Gods in Council heard. (p. 19)

Tea is described as superior to nectar and nepenthe, the drink of the gods. It at once causes delight and heat among the gods and goddesses, and the candidates speak in turn of how they are suitable to be the patron of tea. For instance, Juno, goddess of marriage and the queen of the gods, speaks of her right to 'Claim and Seize' this honour, for she is the wife to Jove (king of the gods) and 'Queen of Plants'.[57] Minerva, goddess of poetry and wisdom, pleads on behalf of tea's capacity to evoke poetic inspiration.[58] Venus speaks of her attachment to tea on behalf of love and all things beautiful (pp. 21-22). Thetis, a sea nymph, who gives the longest of speeches amongst the candidates, pleads for her connection to tea by describing it as the '*Panacea*', especially for the seamen in relief of their seasickness.[59] Moreover, Thetis claims that

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[57] With soothing Arts of Language strive to please:
I come not here to Plead, but Claim and Seize:
Right I demand; and Deities, I know,
Will do me Right – for, Gods I'll have it so. (p. 19)

[58] 'Tis *Tea* sustains, *Tea* only can inspire
The poet's Flame, that feeds the Hero's Fire. (p. 21)

[59] O, for their Suff'ring sakes, in pity grant
This *Panacea*, this Reviving Plant;
Relieve their Mis'ry, or revoke their Breath;

> 'Tis I that rule your watry World below;
> To Mortals I the Arts of Commerce show,
> To me your *Albion* does her Glory owe.
> By Me her Fleets to Eastern Climates run,
> And spread their Wings beneath the rising Sun. (p. 24)

The verse at once highlights the maritime power of the British Empire, and emphasises the significance of shipping to the empire's trade with the East. SOMNUS, god of sleep, is the last of the divinities who speak in this assembly. Woken up by the heated competition amongst the other candidates, Somnus describes his vision of a world where people's cares are soothed by tea, a nectar that stimulates one's desire for better life.[60] Despite the fact that both gods and goddesses attend this assembly, Somnus is the only god that participates as a candidate in the competition. The seemingly closer association between tea and women is conventional in literary and artistic portrayals of the tea-table in the eighteenth century, which at once expresses praise for the drink's soft and gentle qualities, and provokes debate on the meanings of the feminine space.[61]

After listening to all the speeches, Jove (king of the gods) rises to announce his decision concerning the patronage of tea. He believes that since tea embraces so many virtues, it should be made a goddess in itself. Jove's decision is written in nine lines of the verse, and concludes the second canto of this poem. The rather brief conclusion to a heated competition carries comic effect, which would resonate with the poem's standing as a mock-epic work. The comedy also lies in the ironic fact that, despite what is said about tea's calming effect, the drink actually provokes a fight among gods and

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Give'em the Drink of Health, or give 'em Death! (p. 25)

[60] For sure, when sprightly *Tea* and *Fancy* join
Their Wond'rous Pow'rs, the Work must be Divine. (p. 26)

[61] Tea's association with women will be further discussed in this chapter.

goddesses. The ritualistic summoning of gods and goddesses is conventional for the heroic (and mock-heroic) catalogue, and the adoption of such devices contributes to a fitting portrayal of an exotic culture within a literary domain familiar to British readers.

Some critics have described *Panacea* as a poem about the origin of tea.[62] While the poem states that tea comes from China, it does not seem to revolve around the origin of tea in the historical sense. Tea and its origin are made to engage with complex mythological analogies. As will be shown in more tea exaltation poems that followed Tate's work in the eighteenth century, the verse about tea is less concerned with its native culture than with the meanings it might have brought to Britain itself. Such allegorically veiled treatment of tea, nonetheless, marks a form of origin in Britain's reception of Chinese commodities beyond their mere commercial values.

Peter Motteux, a retail merchant of luxury commodities from China as well as a writer, had first-hand involvement in the tea trade of early eighteenth-century Britain, and was therefore able to discern the practical and commercial benefits of tea more clearly than fellow writers on the same subject. However, Motteux was thus inclined to celebrate tea as a progressive force, as demonstrated in *A Poem in Praise of Tea* (1712).[63]

In this poem, the poet adopts first-person narration, which not only intensifies his personal attachment to tea but also adds more vivacity to the activity of tea-drinking. In the first part of the poem, the speaker shows a contrast between tea, which is soothing and calming to the spirit, and wine, which is dangerous and allows only momentary joy. He describes how drinking tea enables him to drive away the ills caused by his consumption of wine at a friends' gathering the previous night:

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[62] Ulrich Broich, *The Eighteenth-Century Mock-Heroic Poem*, trans. D. Henry Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), p. 86. Markman Ellis, Introduction to *Panacea*, Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. I], pp. 1-3. Ellis et al., *Empire of Tea*, p. 80.

[63] Peter Anthony Motteux, *A Poem Upon Tea* (1712), in Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. I], this quotation is taken from pp. 37-48. All subsequent references to this poem will appear in-text.

> I drink, and lo the kindly Steams arise,
> Wine's Vapour flags, and soon subsides and dies.
> The friendly Spirits brighten mine again,
> Repel the *Brute*, and re-inthrone the *Man*. (p. 43, italics added)

In these two rhyming couplets, tea is not only praised for its healthy and restorative effects, but is also depicted as symbolizing how civilization has progressed from a barbarous state. It is worth observing here that the product of a distant eastern region is described as capable of influencing western civilization, at a time when Britain prided itself on its progressiveness. Perhaps it was partly because of such foreign commercial and cultural input that Britain was to understand itself better and form its own identity in a global context.

The second part of the poem moves from a human banquet to the feasting of the gods, as the speaker observes the gods and goddesses debating the virtues of tea and wine (the banquet is supplied by Bacchus, god of wine). Tea is described as similar to a piece of art that is to be appreciated and wondered at:

> The Heav'nly Guests advance with eager haste;
> They gaze, they smell, they drink, and bless the Taste. (p. 43)

The drunken Bacchus attacks the taste of tea as 'damn'd for want of Strength' (p. 43). While Bacchus praises wine for its power to make the gods drunk and make them 'something more than Gods', Hebe (the goddess of youth) defends the rich restorative effects of tea against the seducing steams of wine (p. 44). Associating tea with reason, Hebe's statement, like the speaker's in the first part of the poem, represents tea-drinking as favourable to a cultured and civilized society. Likewise, Apollo compares tea to 'Light', which foreshadows a nation's fate:

> Tea first in *China* did all Arts improve,
> And, like my Light, still Westward thence they move.
> Well might all Nations be by those out-done
> Who first enjoy'd that Nectar and the Sun. (p. 45)

It is interesting to observe that the conventional association between the stranger, darkness and corruption is challenged in the gods' account of tea. The metaphor of 'Light' once again shows the enlightening progress brought by tea to culture and civilization. The imagery of 'giving' and 'receiving', which concludes Apollo's praise of tea, further demonstrates the wisdom of the East as instrument of empowerment (cultural and commercial) to the western world:

> And *Asia* give, while *Europe*'s Sons agree,
> Her Spice, her Pearls, her Diamonds, and her Tea. (p. 48)

In *Romanticism and the Question of the Stranger*, David Simpson argues that the eighteenth-century attitudes to the question of the stranger had a foundation in classic-pagan tradition.[64] In a number of well-known ancient Greek literary works such as Sophocles's *Oedipus at Colonus* and Homer's *Odyssey*, 'the stranger' is portrayed as 'dangerous but responsive to benevolence'.[65] The opposing qualities embodied in the figure of the stranger provoke desire and discomfort at the same time. In Motteux's poem, the 'stranger' (or a strange commodity) – tea – is introduced in the feast of the

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[64] David Simpson, *Romanticism and the Question of the Stranger*, p. 23.
[65] Ibid.

Greek gods, and by the end of the feast, all the gods and goddesses (despite a degree of reluctance on the part of the god of wine) end up drinking tea together, which highlights the reasonable and virtuous side of tea consumption.

However, as Simpson points out, the stranger is also potentially capable of corruption. Tea and tea-drinking were also considered to bring entirely opposite effects to those proclaimed by Motteux's speaker. In two satirical essays written by an unknown author, for example, tea is depicted as a kind of unnecessary luxury that corrupts the simplicity of life of the British in the eighteenth century.[66] British enthusiasm for tea and its equipage seems to the author to be a dangerous indulgence in luxury, creating a confusion of values, which can even destabilize the moral state of the nation. In 'The Expensive Use of drinking Tea', the anonymous author criticizes his people for being 'exorbitant' in eating and drinking (p. 68). The complex etiquette involved in tea-drinking and the expense of the tea equipage, together with tea-drinking itself, are described as 'luxury and pride', and are 'always reckon'd the streight Road to Damnation' (p. 69). By contrast with the elevating effect of tea as depicted in Motteux's poem, the author of this essay sees tea as dark and corrupting. Moreover, the author holds tea responsible for the blurring of class boundaries, as both the ladies and gentlemen of the higher rank as well as those of the lower rank (such as 'clerk' and 'player') have developed the habit of drinking tea.

The Judeo-Christian tradition is another fundamental type of eighteenth-century thinking about the stranger as identified by Simpson.[67] In 'Melancholy Considerations of the Universal POISON, or the dismal Effects of TEA', the speaker compares tea to the 'forbidden fruit' in the Garden of Eden which leads to the Fall of Man. In the biblical scene alluded to by the author, the 'stranger' (the fruit eaten by Eve) is clearly considered as tempting but destructive. By adopting the biblical story of the damnation of Adam and Eve, the author seeks to foreshadow and convince the reader of the serious outcome that can ensue from indulgence in tea-drinking. The Fall from Paradise is at once degeneration and awakening, and this biblical account of 'the stranger' carries double meanings in itself. Compared to the 'forbidden fruit', tea is seen here as potentially dangerous but also destined to attract attention.

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[66] 'Discourse II. Of the Expensive Use of Drinking Tea' (1722), and 'Discourse II. Melancholy Considerations of the Universal Poison' (1722), taken from *Whipping-Tom: or, a Rod for a Proud Lady*, in Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table in Eighteenth-Century England* [vol.I], pp. 61-77. All references from this work are to this edition.

The author of this satirical essay disapproves in particular of any low vulgar women (e.g. 'Fritter-Women, Milk Women, Apple Women, Flat-Caps') drinking tea, and goes so far as to classify 'Drinking Tea' and 'unlawful Copulation' as their 'darling Sins' (p. 73). For many critics of tea, such as the author of the essay, tea-drinking blurs class boundaries and therefore carries the risk of destabilizing an established social order; it also puts morality into question, as the want of control and measurement often lead to extravagance and excess.

Such an idea was also articulated by Jonas Hanway. Hanway's 'An Essay on Tea' – an addendum to his *A Journal of Eight days Journey from Portsmouth to Kingston upon Thames* (1756) – was one of the most widely known polemics against tea-drinking in eighteenth-century Britain.[68] Hanway's work also provoked a literary skirmish with

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[67] Simpson, *Romanticism and the Question of the Stranger*, p. 23.

[68] Jonas Hanway, 'An Essay on Tea', *A Journal of Eight days Journey from Portsmouth to Kingston*

Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith, who perceived Hanway's views of tea as prejudiced and unconvincing. There are three major points to Hanway's argument against tea-drinking. Hanway first explains to 'Mrs. O' – the nominal recipient of most of the letters in this epistolary essay – how tea is injurious to health.[69] The author suggests that the hot water that is used to make tea is pernicious to health: 'I believe no body disputes that hot water relaxes, but they are not aware that such relaxation confirms a scorbutic habit and creates many other disorders' (p. 220). Beneath the explicit argument that hot water causes physical disorders, Hanway also disapproves of any reliance on apparent comfort. In Hanway's argument, hot liquid can not only cause agitation in some constitutions and lead to various forms of disorder, but also is 'very hurtful to the TEETH' (p. 74). The author supports his argument by showing that the Chinese who drink hot tea have bad teeth, whereas the Portuguese ladies who 'drink cold water instead of sipping hot' have very good teeth (p. 74). Teeth are also a symbol of class and breeding, and by contrasting the teeth of the Chinese with the teeth of the European, Hanway's argument is also racially charged. The author also sees the problem of tea-drinking as endangering future generations. When English mothers and wet-nurses sip bad tea during the period of breast-feeding, the infants' constitutions will supposedly be injured by this 'pernicious' kind of liquid.

Another aspect of Hanway's critique of tea-drinking is its influence on society. For Hanway, the huge consumption of tea in England encourages the nation's pursuit

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upon Thames (London: H. Woodfall, 1756), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco>. All references are to this edition.

[69] 'Mrs O' is the recipient of twenty of the twenty-five letters of this essay, and 'Mrs D' is the recipient of the rest of the letters. Their identities are not disclosed.

of fashion and luxury, and ultimately 'impoverish[es] the nation'.[70] The nation's great demand for tea also binds the country to trade with other countries, which generates prodigious imports. For the author, the vast increase in imports into England from the beginning of the eighteenth century has brought more profit to the supplying countries than to England. For example, he describes how the French, by establishing the trade of 'running' (smuggling) tea into England, have 'found their PROFIT IN OUR [England's] FOLLY ever since' (p. 72).

The consumption of tea in England for Hanway is also detrimental to social stability. Hanway not only observes that by the beginning of the eighteenth century, the use of tea had already 'descended to the PLEBEIAN order among us', but also reinforces his prejudice against tea consumption among the lower class by suggesting that 'if [tea-drinking] had always remained sacred to LADIES of quality, it had been HAPPIER for us' (p. 71). The reader may infer from such claims that Hanway's polemic against tea encompasses far broader questions than the simple health concerns raised at the outset of his essay. Five years prior to the publication of Hanway's *An Essay on Tea*, in his preface to *An enquiry into the causes of the late increase of robbers*, Fielding had argued that it is impossible for Britain to maintain the same social order in the face of the vast change brought by trade and luxury. Fielding claims that while the politician finds many reasons to compensate for the faults brought by trade to the nation, he 'forgets himself a little, when he joins the Philosopher in lamenting the Introduction of Luxury as a casual Evil'.[71] Fielding states that

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[70] 'Impoverishing the Nation' is part of the full title of Hanway's work: 'AN ESSAY ON TEA: Considered as pernicious to HEALTH; obstructing INDUSTRY; and impoverishing the NATION: WITH A Short Account of its Growth, and great Consumption in these Kingdoms. WITH Several Political Reflections. IN TWENTY-FIVE LETTERS, Addressed to two Ladies.'

> Trade and Luxury do indeed support each other […] To prevent this Consequence therefore of a flourishing Commerce is totally to change the Nature of Things, and to separate the Effect from the Cause.[72]

He rightly points out that consumption and luxury are an inseparable pair of 'cause' and 'effect'. Fielding's view can be used to demonstrate a lack of rationality in Hanway's argument of keeping the habit of tea-drinking only among wealthy people, as the growth in consumerism would inevitably lead to a redefinition of class boundaries in British society.

The third key argument against tea made by Hanway – and most importantly for this study – is its association with China. For the author, sipping tea is an 'effeminate' custom that originated in China, and this fashion carries the risk of endangering England's imperial spirit (p. 87). Without openly debasing China as a nation, the author's unfavourable opinions of China are expressed through his denunciation of Chinese tea. Indeed, when Hanway urges Mrs. O to 'exert [her] skill and industry, to make the discovery of some / wholesome and agreeable beverage, be it cold or hot, to supply the place of tea' (p. 93), it seems that all his concerns about hot water, health and even commerce are cast aside in order to distance England from Chinese influences.

A few months after the publication of 'An Essay on Tea', Samuel Johnson's review of this work appeared in *The Literary Magazine* (April – May, 1757).[73] As an avid tea drinker, Johnson articulates a very different perspective from Hanway's towards tea and tea-drinking. At the outset of the review, Johnson reminds the reader of Hanway's request that the public should forebear their judgement of the work till its second edition ('*corrected and enlarged*') – an 'injunction' Johnson describes as 'rather too magisterial' despite its being 'punctually obeyed' (161). Hanway's determination to protect his work from public critique reflects his serious concern as to how his work will be received. This is also evident in his polemic against tea. Johnson's review of 'An Essay on Tea' takes a linear approach by tracing Hanway's argument and quoting – sometimes extensively – passages from this essay.[74] After relating a number of faults Hanway finds against tea-drinking – such as his claims that drinking tea is injurious to health and beauty – Johnson observes that 'Of these dreadful effects [identified by Hanway], some are perhaps imaginary, and some may have another cause' (163). He agrees that the pursuit of luxury has brought about evil to society, yet also points out that 'this new race of evils, will not be expelled by the prohibition of tea' (163). For Johnson, while tea-drinking is one of the 'amusements of the idle and luxurious', it is not the cause of 'general languor'. He attributes the cause of general idleness to the change in people's mode of life in contemporary society:

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[71] Fielding, *An Enquiry*, pp. xi-xii.

[72] Ibid., p. xii.

[73] Samuel Johnson, review of 'An Essay on Tea', *The Literary Magazine* (Numb. Xiii, April 15 –

> The whole mode of life is changed, every kind of voluntary labour, every exercise that strengthened the nerves, and hardened the muscles, is fallen into disuse. The inhabitants are crowded together in populous cities, so that no occasion of life requires much motion; every one is near to all that he

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May 15, 1757), 161-167. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco>. All references from this review are to this edition.

[74] Although extensive passages about Hanway's views appear in quotation marks in Johnson's review, they are often paraphrased, as exact wording cannot be traced in Hanway's original work.

> wants; and the rich and delicate seldom pass from one street to another, but in carriages of pleasure […] they that pass ten hours in bed, and eight at cards, and the greater part of the other six at the table, are taught to impute to tea, all the diseases which a life unnatural in all its parts, may chance to bring upon them. (163-164)

Although it might appear forceful in its tone, Johnson's statement maintains that social ills are produced by multiple factors, and that imputing social problems to tea would not solve these problems. There is also a limit (or condition) to the plausibility of Johnson's statements: they apply to the wealthy members of society who live urban lives, possess nearly all that they want, and travel in carriages.

It is on the influence of tea upon social classes that Johnson and Hanway seem to agree. While Hanway states his prejudice against tea-drinking among the lower classes, Johnson admits that tea is not proper for people of the lower classes. In his review, Johnson observes that

> I have no desire to appear captious, and shall, therefore, readily admit, that tea is a liquor not proper for the lower classes of the people, as it supplies no strength to labour, or relief to disease, but gratifies the taste, without nourishing the body. It is a barren superfluity, to which those who can hardly procure what nature requires, cannot prudently habituate themselves. Its proper use is to amuse the idle, and relax the studious, and dilute the full meals of those who cannot use exercise, and will not use abstinence. (166)

The oxymoron of 'barren superfluity' encapsulates Johnson's attitude towards tea-drinking among the lower classes. However, unlike Hanway, Johnson does not see tea as 'injurious' to any kind of drinkers: it does not bring much benefit to people who can barely afford the daily essentials, while it plays a more functional role for the more well-to-do members of society. In *Consuming Anxieties*, Charlotte Sussman points out that Hanway 'figures tea-drinking as an "infection" and a "disease" – something that marks itself directly and internally on the body itself'; she argues that Hanway has made the effects of tea-drinking 'physical rather than attitudinal', as he maintains that tea makes the labouring classes unfit for work.[75] A connection between food and the nation is established in 'An Essay on Tea'. Sussman states that '[in Hanway's point of view] consuming the food of another culture somehow transforms the English into that culture'.[76] In the second letter of his essay, Hanway draws a contrast in describing the Chinese as 'the most effeminate people on the face of the whole earth', and the British as 'WISE, ACTIVE and WARLIKE' (p. 70). Thus when his fellow men develop the custom of 'sipping tea', Hanway sees them as more wanton and absurd than the Chinese (p. 70). At times, it is hard to identify whether it is the nation (China) or the food that is the cause of Hanway's prejudice. The author's dislike of tea may have provoked his ill opinion of the country that produces it, while his national pride may deem the product of another country as contagious to his own culture. Perhaps it is this subtle interplay between domestic consumption and national (and international) concern in Hanway's polemic that led to the lively debate between the author and his contemporaries.

Johnson also criticises Hanway for digressing in his discussion from tea to

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[75] Charlotte Sussman, *Consuming Anxieties: Consumer Protest, Gender, and British Slavery, 1713-1833* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 27.

[76] Ibid.

'spirituous liquors'. In this part of his criticism, Johnson quotes and paraphrases extensively from Hanway's essay. Johnson mentions that Hanway first draws a connection between 'tea' and 'gin' due to his belief in the spread of their 'baneful influence over this island', and then exemplifies the ill effects of such drink to workhouses in contrast to the good management of the foundling hospital where these drinks are banned (164). Johnson cites Hanway's observation:

> Spirituous liquors being abolished, instead of having the most undisciplined and abandoned poor, we might soon boast a race of men, temperate, religious, and industrious, even to a *proverb*. (165)

Tea is described not only as strong and potentially dangerous as an alcoholic drink, but also as culturally poisonous. While Hanway indicates that people who abstain from drinking tea and gin are likely to be religious, Johnson casts doubts on such a link by relating his experience in a foundling hospital:

> I am inclined to believe irreligion equally pernicious with gin and tea […] when a few months ago I wandered through the [foundling] hospital, I found not a child that seemed to have heard of his creed or the commandments. To breed up children in this manner, is to rescue them from an early grave, that they may find employment for the gibbet; from dying in innocence, that they may perish by their crimes. (166)

Johnson suggests that in the foundling hospital where tea and gin are banned, children do not become the more religious: although the hospital has saved their physical life, the chance for their spiritual survival looks dim. While it is reasonable for Johnson to criticise Hanway's association of abstinence from tea-drinking with religious virtues, Johnson's own view of being religious here might require closer analysis. Reading religious doctrines does not necessarily lead one to become religious, and one's spiritual faith may be innate rather than taught. Johnson's argument here against Hanway would benefit from consideration of more possibilities, yet Johnson has also made clear that he is unapologetic about his defence of tea. Right at the opening of his review, Johnson presents himself as 'a hardened and shameless tea-drinker' (161), and comes back to support this claim in the middle of his argument by stating that 'I comfort myself, that all the enemies of tea cannot be in the right' (164).

Hanway's discussion of the foundling hospital is a central topic in the debate between him and Johnson, as Johnson emphasises this subject in both his review of 'An Essay on Tea' and his response to Hanway's paper in the *Gazetteer*.[77] The latter work, entitled 'A Reply to a Paper in the Gazetteer of May 26, 1757', is Johnson's reply to Hanway's attack on his review of 'An Essay on Tea'. Hanway's paper, which was published in the *Gazetteer*, has not survived to the present day, yet some quotations from it are offered in Johnson's reply.[78] In this reply, he describes Hanway as a man who 'puts horses to his chariot', an expression that illustrates Hanway's fury in his paper against Johnson. The whole debate is an intense one, as both Hanway's work of attack and Johnson's reply appear within a month after the publication of the latter's review.[79]

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[77] In this reply, Johnson suggests that Hanway questions through his paper in the *Gazetteer* how Johnson examines the children in the foundling hospital about their knowledge in religion. Johnson tells that he has done further investigation into this matter, and states that 'Orders [of children's learning of religious rudiments] are easily made, but they do not execute themselves.' Johnson also recounts his experience in the foundling hospital, when the children cannot answer his questions about religion while seeming a lot readier to answer questions of other types. Johnson's reply was originally published in *The Literary Magazine*, vol. 2, issue 14 (London, May 1757). Samuel Johnson, 'A Reply to a Paper in the Gazetteer, May 26', in *The Works of Samuel Johnson* [vol. 1] (Dublin: printed for Luke White, 1793), pp. 393-394. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco>. All references are to this edition.

[78] No surviving copies of the *Gazetteer* of May 1757 can be located. Matthew Mauger, 'Introduction' to 'An Essay on Tea', in ed. Ellis, *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. III], p. 61.

Most points made by Johnson in this reply function as a further development of ideas he makes in the previous work (review of 'An Essay on Tea'). Observing his own experience of tea-drinking, Johnson casts doubt on Hanway's claim that tea is detrimental to health: 'I have drank [tea] twenty years without hurt, and therefore believe it not to be poison (p. 391).' Hinting at Hanway's concerns about tea as injurious to health and pernicious to domestic labour and industry, Johnson describes how '[he has] moderately doubted whether it has diminished the strength of our men, or the beauty of our women, and whether it much hinders the progress of our woollen or iron manufactures' (p. 391). Furthermore, Johnson also questions some of Hanway's 'evidence' against tea-drinking. For example, Johnson suggests that there is not enough evidence available to show that 'the English and Dutch consume more tea than the vast empire of China' as claimed by Hanway (p. 392). Johnson observes that 'evidence' and 'inclination' are the only two sources for 'belief' that he knows of; as certain beliefs about tea held by Hanway are not founded on 'evidence', they can only be ascribed to 'inclination' (p. 392).

Johnson also refers back to his review of Hanway's essay, in which he criticises the author for having 'no intention to find any thing right at home' (p. 392). In Hanway's response to Johnson's first review, he defends himself by claiming that 'he finds many things right at home and that he loves his country almost to enthusiasm'

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[79] Johnson's review was published in the *Literary Magazine*, issue of April 15 to May 15, 1757. Hanway's paper came out on May 26, and Johnson's reply was published in the May 1757 issue of the *Literary Magazine*.

(paraphrased by Johnson in his second review) (p. 392). This time Johnson calls the reader's attention to Hanway's self-acclaimed enthusiastic love for his country: 'When a man is enthusiastic he ceases to be reasonable, and when he once departs from reason, what will he do but drink sour tea?' (p. 393). In *A Dictionary of the English Language* (1755), Johnson describes 'enthusiasm' as 'a vain confidence of divine favour or communication';[80] thus in the context of eighteenth-century rhetoric, 'enthusiasm' was associated with extravagant or misdirected emotion. Johnson's description here at once implies the lack of a reasonable foundation to Hanway's polemic against tea and ironically yet playfully recommends tea-drinking to this active critic of tea.

In his review of Hanway's *A Journal of Eight Days Journey from Portsmouth to Kingston Upon Thames* (*Monthly Review*, July 1757), Goldsmith describes Hanway's polemical attack on tea as inappropriate. Goldsmith points out that Hanway 'seems to reserve his powers till he comes to treat of Tea, against which he inveighs through almost the whole second volume; assuming the physician, philosopher, and politician'.[81] This remark not only reflects Hanway's particular emphasis on the topic of tea-drinking across a variety of themes in his work, but also implies Goldsmith's scepticism towards Hanway's assumption as an authority on tea. Goldsmith criticises Hanway for 'saying every thing that may be said on every subject, than of only selecting all that can be said to the purpose'. He thus describes the author's arguments against tea as unconvincing (p. 464). Furthermore, Goldsmith satirises the way Hanway claims expertise in areas such as medicine and science without actually being a qualified expert in these fields: 'perhaps it argues some want of prudence, to speak of subjects to which our acquirements are not adequate' (p. 465). In conclusion, Goldsmith sees tea as a 'scapegoat' for Hanway to blame for the state of English Society, in particular the pursuit of luxury and the tendency of the lower classes to emulate their superiors. Unlike Hanway, Goldsmith does not view the English people's pursuit of luxury as necessarily a bad thing: 'why so violent an outcry against this devoted article of modern luxury [tea]? Every nation that is rich hath had, and will have, its favourite luxuries' (465). Perhaps Goldsmith underestimates the unprecedented degree to which consumerism developed in the eighteenth century, and ignores the unavoidable ills that this brought with it; on the other side, the ill effects of consumerism are overly exaggerated by Hanway.

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[80] *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://www.oed.com>.

[81] Oliver Goldsmith, review of Hanway's *Eight Days Journey* (originally published in *The Monthly Review* [July 1757]), in *The Miscellaneous Works of Oliver Goldsmith* (London: John Murray, 1837), pp. 460-465. This quotation is taken from p. 461. All references from this work are to this edition.

In 'An Essay on Tea', Hanway shows a tendency to overplay the reasons for his dislike of tea, which results in a simplification of his argument in black-and-white terms. Sussman argues that

> The essay exemplifies the kind of anxieties about international relations mediated by foreign commodities. Although those items might be said to stand in a metonymical relation to the complexities of the international market, Hanway's text reduces the volatile issues of mercantile expansion to a relationship between British consumers and non-European produce.[82]

The way the author reduces a study of tea to a straightforward attack at both national and international levels is not a rare approach taken by writers on China in the eighteenth century. Tea, as with other representations of China, is made to serve specific purposes beyond its simple but volatile emblem of culture.

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[82] Sussman, *Consuming Anxieties*, p. 25.

In some eighteenth-century criticism against the consumption of tea, tea is often portrayed as feminine and domestic. As two popular types of imported hot beverage in eighteenth-century Britain, coffee and tea were made to embody masculine and feminine behaviours respectively in a variety of literary and critical works. Markman Ellis points out that poems and satires about tea and tea-drinking of this period describe 'the tea-table, with its associated rituals of tea service and visiting days [as] an ideological construction central to eighteenth-century conceptions of gender and domesticity.'[83] While the coffee-houses stood for masculinity and the public, the tea-tables were representative of the private and the 'feminized'. Although tea became increasingly popular in eighteenth-century coffee-houses, and tea-tables at home were open to men as well as women, stereotypical attitudes towards tea and coffee were still prevalent in eighteenth-century discourse on tea. However, given tea's medicinal and calming effect, the portrayal of tea as feminine and effeminate (as in Hanway's critique) encompasses more than it demonstrates on the surface. The restorative qualities of tea can help control excessive feelings and thus promote more reasonable thinking for both men and women.

In Motteux's *Poem Upon Tea* (1712), it is Hebe – the gentle goddess of youth – who prepares tea for the gods and goddesses: 'Fair *Hebe* then the grateful Tea prepares,

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[83] Markman Ellis, Introduction, in Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. I], p. xxii.

/ Which to the feasting Goddesses she bears' (43). It is also Hebe who first responds to Bacchus (god of wine)'s attack on tea by explaining the many virtues of drinking tea. Although in this poem, coffee is replaced by wine as representative of masculine traditions, the contrast between tea and wine suggests the tensions wrought by tea in marital and domestic relationships.

In *The Tea Drinking Wife, and Drunken Husband* (1749), an anonymous ballad miscellany on drinking that consists of three poems, tea is depicted as the source of domestic tension. In the first poem, the husband blames the wife for indulging in tea-drinking, which for him is associated with useless gossiping and small talk around the tea-table. Tea exemplifies the vain pursuit of new fashions. The husband accuses his wife of laziness, which he attributes to her tea-drinking:

> Until ten or eleven o'Clock you seldom will rise;
> And then when you're up you must have your desire,
> And straight get the Tea-kettle clapt on the Fire.
> […]
> There is pratling [*sic*] and tatling [*sic*] until it be Noon,
> By this time my Dinner it ought to be done.[84]

Tea becomes responsible for a domestic failure to follow routines, and ultimately, for the wife's inability to fulfill her proper domestic role.

A cultural emblem in itself, Chinese tea is made by some writers to shed moral light on the ideas and behaviours of the British in the eighteenth century. In a way, tea is at once emblematic of China, and embodies the notion of the stranger; this invites praise and hostility at the same time. Discussions of the virtue or vice of tea in the above texts demonstrates the power this foreign commodity held over eighteenth-century British culture. The coexistence of fear and desire towards tea-drinking – as indicated through the selected literature – exemplifies the tensions and uncertainties produced by reflections on China in the period. The attributes of the stranger are likely to be positive as well as negative; contrasting ideas and viewpoints towards cultural difference are necessary tensions in the continuing self-examination and development of eighteenth-century British culture.

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[84] *The Tea Drinking Wife, and Drunken Husband* (1749), in Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. I], pp. 161-171. This quotation is taken from p. 165.

Huang Hsing-Tsung, a Chinese historian of science, suggests that tea was discovered in around 1000BC during the Chinese Zhou dynasty, and the use of tea leaves as drinks (possibly for medical purposes at first) began in Szechuan province before the Chinese Han dynasty (thus at some time before 206BC). Chinese sources on tea emerged around 760AD after Lu Yu's *Tea Classic*, the first book written about tea. Huang also suggests that an extensive body of Chinese scholarly and literary works appeared over the second century, which discuss various aspects of tea and tea-drinking such as cultivation, preparation and the art of drinking.[85] However, as Markman Ellis shows, Chinese scholarship on tea 'largely remained unseen' when European travellers first made contact with China.[86] On the one hand, the Chinese generally kept knowledge of tea cultivation to themselves; on the other hand, cultural insights about China acquired by westerners in the eighteenth century were often misconstrued. One may recall the observations made by Oliver Goldsmith's fictional Chinese protagonist, Lien Chi, on the ineffective cultural discovery made by the Europeans in the East. In

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[85] Markman Ellis, Introduction, in Ellis (ed.), *Tea and the Tea-Table* [vol. I], pp. vii-viii.

[86] Ibid., p. viii.

The Citizen of the World, Lien Chi suggests that merchants and missionaries from the West – people who travel the most into the eastern parts of the world – are not real cultural ambassadors, because they do not acquire cultural insights into the distant regions they set foot on. The 'proper person' qualified for genuine and effective cultural discovery should be unprejudiced and possessed with 'miscellaneous knowledge'.[87]

It was not until the early seventeenth century that European sources about tea began to emerge, and the Europeans started to acquire more extensive knowledge about Chinese tea. The discovery of Chinese tea as both commodity and culture in the mid-seventeenth century is viewed by historians such as J. G. A. Pocock as a moment of historical importance: both a 'discovery of China' and a 'discovery of Chinese learning'.[88] Therefore, discourse on tea in eighteenth-century Europe suggested itself as an embodiment of Sinaean learning, which carries cultural, social, and even political significance.

In *The State of the Poor* (1797), Sir Frederick Morton Eden claims that 'in poor families (in Middlesex and Surrey), tea is not only the usual beverage in the morning and evening, but is generally drank in large quantities even at dinner.'[89] Observations such as this grew from the mid-eighteenth century, and they were the basis of complaints regarding the extravagant lifestyle of the lower classes. Many tea critics emphasised the need for the poor to spend money on more essential products. However, tea was classified into varied types when it was imported to Britain, and accordingly sold at very different prices. On the one hand, from the late seventeenth century, the East India Company regularly presented tea as a gift at Court due to the growing popularity of this exotic fashion among the British upper classes.[90] On the other hand, as James Walvin points out in *Fruits of Empire*, 'the poor consumed the cheapest [tea] of cheap varieties, often adulterated, often using only a few leaves, and often too reusing the same leaves'. With the increased availability of smuggled tea, which was sold at a cheaper price in comparison to tea charged with high duties sold by the East India Company, the widening access to tea-drinking in Britain was not as unreasonable or incomprehensible as some eighteenth-century tea critics suggested.

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[87] Oliver Goldsmith, *The Citizen of the World*, *Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith (Vol. II)*, ed. Arthur Friedman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), Letter CVIII, p. 421.

[88] J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion* (Vol. 4: *Barbarians, Savages and Empires*) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 101.

[89] Sir Frederick Morton Eden, *The State of the Poor, or, An History of the Labouring Classes in England, from the Conquest to the Present Period* (London: J. Davis, 1797), vol. I, p. 535.

Consuming tea is also a form of consuming culture. With the cult of Chinoiserie also prevalent in Europe in the eighteenth century, tea and tea-drinking created enthusiasm and desire for new types of consumer products. Apart from the tea leaves itself, tea equipage – notably the porcelain ware used to brew and serve the tea – became increasingly popular in the British consumer market. The quantity of imported Chinese porcelains was equally large during this period. Moreover, Chinese porcelains prompted a number of British industries to produce British-made porcelains to match the quality of the imported ware. Josiah Wedgwood, for example, became one of the most successful manufacturers of porcelain in Britain. Walvin observes that Wedgewood 'popularized items of trade which were initially exclusive' and therefore

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[90] In a Company letter dated 1685, the Company instructed its agents to send them 'yearly five or six canisters of the very best and freshest Thea [sic]. That which will colour the water in which it is infused, most of a greenish complexion is generally best accepted', in order to 'make presents […] to our great friends at Court.' Cited in James Walvin, *Fruits of Empire*, p. 11.

'transformed the tastes of the English people [in the process of manufacturing English-made porcelain pots and cups].'[91] A German lady described how she was impressed by an upper-class tea party she went to in 1786: 'the tone was intimate and refined: the hostess busied herself delightfully and fast enough to allow grace and deftness […] While we sipped our tea, *pretty and practical discussion took place*.'[92] The lady's description differs from certain comments made by some authors in their works against tea-drinking. The tea party is not only described as cultured and elegant, but is also deemed a suitable place for 'practical discussion'. Both Hanway in *Essay on Tea* and the male speaker (husband) in *The Tea Drinking Wife, and Drunken Husband* associate tea-drinking with triviality. While Hanway describes tea-drinking as an 'effeminate' activity, the male speaker in *The Tea Drinking Wife* accuses women of excessive gossiping around the tea-table. The contrasting viewpoints towards tea-drinking reflect its power to carry broader connotations. Walvin suggests that tea had changed 'British sociability', as '[it] insinuated itself into every walk of life: into the most fashionable of homes […] through to the coarsest of work-places.'[93] Essentially, tea was no longer just a commodity, but carried increasingly significant cultural meanings. When British people were drinking tea, they were consuming an aspect of Chinese culture; yet they were also changing the meaning of what China was and adapting aspects of Chinese culture to their own culture.

The tea trade between Britain and China reflected diplomatic relations and tensions between these two nations. On the British side, complex negotiations were made with the Chinese officials before China agreed to open a small number of ports that granted limited but direct trade with the British. The Chinese imposed severe limitations on trade. For example, they took special care not to reveal knowledge about tea cultivation to the British and insisted on silver in return for the tea leaves. The tensions between the two countries on trade and commerce culminated in the outbreak of the Opium War in 1839. The attractions of the East played a significant role in eighteenth-century British culture. This was reflected in trade and politics, but also in literature and art. While the British were attracted to what they found (i.e. things associated with Chinese culture), their self-claimed imperial superiority also made them frequently question the ethic of their consumption. This tension between desire and anxiety is to be found in different aspects of relations between Britain and China in the eighteenth century; such tensions which were produced by different forms of foreign consumption made Britain the nation it became in the globalizing world of the eighteenth century.

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[91] James Walvin, *Fruits of Empire*, p. 28.
[92] Annette Hope, *The Londoner's Larder* (London, 1990), p. 89. Cited in Walvin, p. 29. Italics added.
[93] Walvin, pp. 21-22.

Chapter Two

'This zeal / So fervid in a stranger's cause': Self and Other in Arthur Murphy's *The Orphan of China*

Arthur Murphy's tragedy, *The Orphan of China* (1759), was the first and only English adaptation of a Chinese opera performed in eighteenth-century Britain.[1] The production of this play was partially influenced by Britain's Seven Years' War with France, but it also provides valuable insights into Britain's encounter with China. By comparing different versions of the original Chinese story, of which Murphy's adaptation is one, this chapter will discuss *The Orphan of China*'s place in eighteenth-century English culture and literature. In particular, the play's interplay with tragic conventions, the debates it generated among some of the great literary figures in Europe, and its intriguing reflections on the status of women in Chinese and British societies, demonstrate the flexibility of the cultural border between self and other. Apparently different approaches to the exploration of a foreign culture might, in the end, achieve a kind of union through their shared interest in and desire for the subject in question, which can contribute to the development of understanding between cultures.

Entitled *The Little Orphan of the Family of Tchao (Zhao Shi Gu Er)*, the original Chinese opera was composed by Ji Junxiang around 1330 (Chinese Yuan Dynasty).[2]

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[1] On the title page of this play, Murphy describes *The Orphan of China* as 'a tragedy'. Further discussion will be made in this chapter on the play's relation to the idea of tragedy.

[2] Peter Kitson, '"Reason in China is not Reason in England": Eighteenth-century Adaptations of China by Horace Walpole and Arthur Murphy', in *Romantic Adaptations: Essays in Mediation and Remediation*, eds. C. Duffy, P. Howell, and C. Ruddell (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2013), pp. 9-22, at p. 16.

The opera tells a tragic story based on real figures and incidents from Chinese history of around 550BC.[3] It was at first translated into French in 1735 by Joseph de Prémare, a Jesuit missionary to China. Prémare left out the numerous musical arias of the opera and translated only the prose dialogue, and his translation was included in Jean-Baptiste Du Halde's much consulted collection of works about (and from) China, *Description de l'empire de la Chine*, published in Paris in the same year.[4] In France, *The Little Orphan of the Family of Tchao* was famously adapted into a stage play, *L'Orphelin de la Chine*, by Voltaire, in 1755. *The Orphan of China* can be seen, in a sense, as Murphy's response to Voltaire's adaptation.

The Orphan of China revolves around a revenge plot of the Chinese against the Tartars, and focuses on the protagonists' intense and fatal struggles between self-interest and the greater good. Zamti and Mandane face the terrible dilemma of sacrificing their biological son, Hamet, in the place of the Chinese prince and their adopted son, Etan (also known as 'Zaphimri'), at the height of the Tartars' invasion of a leaderless China.[5] In his battle between paternal feelings and patriotic zeal, Zamti willingly embraces the larger plan, and does all he can to put Etan back on the throne; this involves breaches of a father's duty to his own son. Zamti is obliged to send Hamet away after his birth to live with Morat the hermit, in order to keep the baby prince under his protection without arousing suspicion; when Hamet is caught by the Tartars and mistaken for the Chinese prince, Zamti cannot save Hamet's life on account of his duty to protect the real Chinese prince. Responding to Mandane's accusation of his barbarity towards his own son ('inhuman father'), Zamti tells his wife that '[He] was a subject ere [he] was a father.'[6]

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[3] The historical story is recorded in *The Records of the Grand Historian*（《史记》）, a monumental historical work about ancient China authored by Chinese Han Dynasty historian, Sima Qian, and completed in around 94 BC.

[4] As music is an integral part of an opera, European adaptations of *The Little Orphan of the Family of Tchao* have broken the integrity of this Chinese work. There might have been, however, difficulties in performing the music part of the opera, as traditional Chinese instruments were not commonly available in eighteenth-century Europe.

[5] Zaphimri is the only living descendant of the Chinese royal house. The Tartars have killed his parents and his relatives twenty years before the time of the play's opening.

The strong revenge element in this play, together with the protagonist's divided duties and commitments, bears the hallmark of a traditional English revenge tragedy. In an English Renaissance tragedy, the tragic hero is often found to be struggling between inward and outward forces. In their influential works on tragedy, both A. C. Bradley and Raymond Williams suggest that the tragic trait of a hero can at once be his weakness and greatness.[7] In *The Orphan of China*, tragedy comes around because of divided goodness. The goodness in Zamti ironically divides him, leading to his untimely death towards the end of the play.[8] As a result, eighteenth-century British audiences would have been familiar with the general thematic patterns in this play; despite the work's Chinese origin and settings, *The Orphan of China* proved itself capable of fascinating the western mind.

The prologue of this play draws particular attention to the character of Zamti.[9] In a mock-heroic tone, the prologue introduces the play's Chinese settings and uses ‘Confucius’ morals’ to represent the image of China:

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[6] Arthur Murphy, *The Orphan of China*, 2nd ed. (London: P. Vaillant, 1759), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/>, Act II Scene ii, p. 31. All subsequent references to this play will appear in-text.

[7] 'The hero's tragic trait, which is also his greatness, is fatal to him', in A. C. Bradley, *Shakespearean Tragedy* (London: Macmillan, 1905), p. 14. 'The error [of the hero] is moral, a weakness in an otherwise good man, who can still be pitied', in Raymond Williams, *Modern Tragedy* (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2006), p. 48.

[8] The tragic conclusion of this play will be further discussed in this chapter.

[9] The prologue to *The Orphan of China* is written by William Whitehead (Poet Laureate, 1757-85).

> On eagle wings the poet of to-night
> Soars for fresh virtues to the source of light,
> To China’s eastern realms: and boldly *bears*
> Confucius’ morals to Britannia’s *ears*. (Prologue, n. p., italics added)

In the second rhyming couplet, the ending words, ‘bears’ and ‘ears’, form only a half rhyme, which breaks the harmony of the rhyming verses, and perhaps also suggests a degree of perceived incongruity between Chinese ethical beliefs and British virtues. Moreover, the prologue is couched in the language of heroic conventions, with references, for example, to war and conquest in classical mythology.[10] By describing this story from China as ‘th’ imported boon’, which at once signifies consumption (‘imported’) and acquisition (‘boon’), this line also suggests that the play is an adaptation, and is therefore, in a sense, moulded to serve purposes other than what the original Chinese production embarked on.[11] Later in the prologue, Zamti is described as ‘one dubious character’ and ‘a patriot zealous in a Monarch’s cause’ (Prologue, n. p.). Zamti’s zeal in saving his country in crisis is connected to ‘China’s tenets’:

> If then, assiduous to obtain his end,
> You find too far the subject’s zeal extend
> If undistinguish’d loyalty prevails
> Where nature shrinks, and strong affection fails,
> On *China’s tenets* charge the fond mistake,

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[10] ‘Accept th’ imported boon; as echoing [sic] Greece
Receiv’d from wand’ring chiefs her golden fleece;
Nor only richer by the spoils become,
But praise th’ advent’rous youth, who brings them home.’ (Prologue, n. p.)
The ‘golden fleece’, for example, is a reference to Jason the Argonauts and the Golden Fleece in Greek mythology.

[11] This idea will be further developed in this chapter.

> And spare his error for his Virtue's sake. (Prologue, n. p. italics added)

The speaker of the prologue appears to satirise Zamti's extreme allegiance to his country by calling him a 'dubious character', and accounting for Zamti's patriotism by commenting on China's system of belief that he deems to be inferior to Britain's:

> From *nobler motives* our allegiance springs,
> For Britain knows no Right Divine in Kings.
> From Freedom's choice that boasted right arose,
> And through each line from freedom's choice it flows. (Prologue, n. p., italics added)

For the speaker, the main reason why the principles held by his own countrymen (the British people) generate 'nobler motives' is that they supposedly allow freedom of choice and action. The reference to the divine right of kings alludes to the execution of King Charles I in 1649, and thus to the end of absolute monarchy in Britain and the beginning of a new phase of constitutional monarchy.[12] However, the prologue also casts a sympathetic light on Zamti's conduct in the play. Asking the audience to 'spare [Zamti's] error for his virtue's sake', the speaker seeks to make this character more comprehensible for the audience. The juxtaposition of 'error' and 'virtue' in this verse highlights a kind of ambivalence that would be faced by both the characters and the audience in the course of the play, and seems to suggest that Zamti's 'error', or his near-stoic conduct, is made for a good reason. Perhaps for reasons such as this, the speaker observes that the story is 'rainbow-like', while 'th' encroaching tints invade / Each other's bounds, and mingle light with shade' (Prologue, n. p.).

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[12] The idea of the divine right of kings is common in earlier English plays, such as in Shakespeare's works. This reference, however, is to show the decline of belief in the right of kings that occurred with the execution of Charles I and the restoration of Charles II.

Such a complex attitude towards the play is emblematic of Britain's attitude towards China in the broader picture of the eighteenth century. In 'Luxury, Moral Sentiment, and *The Orphan of China*', Chi-ming Yang observes that there are 'two China(s)' present in the play:

> […] the play's framing and staging evoke[s] *two parallel visions of China* that are opposed yet complementary: the "ancient China" of the play and the "real China" of commercial prowess commented on in its prologue, epilogue, and ancillary materials.[13]

Yang's argument demonstrates a subtle interplay between a China populated with people of flesh and blood and a China that had been reduced to a mere projection of Chinoiserie values. The notion of the two visions of China is also applicable to the central question of virtue and morality here in the prologue. In Yang's view, China 'represented both the heart of the problem and its solution' to the question of consumption in the developing Britain of the mid-eighteenth century. On the one hand, the luxury of theatrical Chinoiserie provoked an appetite for consumption; on the other hand, Confucian ideals of China seemed to provide a means for moral reform at a time of unruly materialism.[14] While consumption may directly refer to the actual purchase of goods, it also signifies the consuming of culture, and, in the context of *The Orphan of China*, a kind of theatrical consumption. Indeed, according to Edward Said, the East is made to appear desirable to the West through various means, such as foreignness and exoticism.[15] As a result, Chinoiserie not only has to do with consumption and consuming, but also with desire. At times it might be the desire to learn and understand, but at other times it is the desire to seek control and even undermine what has already been made. One might sense both types of desire in *The Orphan of China*, being at once an adaptation of an original Chinese text and an attempt to provide insight into a vivid moment in Chinese culture.

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[13] Chi-ming Yang, 'Luxury, Moral Sentiment, and *The Orphan of China*', in *Performing China: Virtue, Commerce, and Orientalism in Eighteenth-Century England, 1660-1760* (Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), pp. 167-8, italics added.

[14] Ibid., p. 149.

In the prologue, parallel visions of China are demonstrated through the troubled depiction of Zamti, whose moral values are connected directly to 'China's tenets', and whose patriotic zeal appears to overshadow his natural inclinations.[16] Both the playwright and some critics of the play seem to attribute Zamti's strict restraint of personal feelings for the good of the nation to China's Confucian values. In the prologue to the play, the speaker declares that Murphy 'boldly bears / Confucius' morals to Britannia's ears'. In the opening of the play, Zamti laments the imminent loss of China in the face of the Tartars' conquests, by expressing his fear that barbarian powers (i.e. the Tartars) might prevail: 'In vain Confucius / Unlock'd his radiant stores of moral truth […] And each fair virtue wither at the blast / Of northern domination' (I. i). Indeed, in the original Chinese opera, the father figure is a doctor of Chinese medicine. Yet in European adaptations of the story, the father is presented as a 'mandarin' (a senior official in the civil service of ancient China) who is loved by the common people for his virtues. This change of identity of the protagonist seems to bring closer the association of China with Confucian values. In an analysis of the play and its representation of China, Peter Kitson observes that the play is ‘a highly tragic meditation on Confucian notions of family piety and dynastic loyalty’.[17] By comparing Voltaire’s French version of the play with Murphy’s English play, Hsin-yun Ou argues that ‘Voltaire’s apparent belief in the supremacy of Chinese civilization and Confucian patriarchal paternalism […] provoke[d] a reaction from Murphy’.[18]

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[15] Edward Said, *Orientalism*. This is the overarching argument of Said's book.

[16] '[…] undistinguish'd loyalty prevails / Where nature shrinks, and strong affection fails' (Prologue, n. p.)

Hsin-yun Ou calls Zamti’s extreme loyalty to his country ‘absolutist patriotism’, and describes the prologue of the play as a ‘censure of Chinese patriotism’.[19] In fact, the association between absolutism and China’s government has a long tradition. Montesquieu, the French political philosopher of the eighteenth century, argues that China represents a despotic form of government – influenced by Confucian rites – which shows no division between public and private:

> Their [The Chinese people’s] customs, manners, laws, and religion, being the same thing, they cannot change all these at once; and as it will happen, that either the conqueror or the conquered must change, in China it has always been the conqueror.[20]

While this chapter has previously suggested that the prologue’s stance in the judgement of the play’s father figure (Zamti) is ambivalent, Montesquieu’s critique of China’s legal system in connection to Confucian ethics is flawed. It is hard to be convinced that an ethical belief that has predominated within a vast and ancient country for centuries would put matters of different categories on the same plane. In Confucianism, 'The Five Constants' (the five main virtues) are clearly defined alongside the ways they may best function in each of 'The Five Bonds' (five main types of relationship between people).[21] Montesquieu's prejudice against Confucian rites might be due to his strong disapproval of absolute government such as that of China.

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[17] Kitson, ‘Eighteenth-century Adaptations of China’, p. 16.

[18] Hsin-yun Ou, ‘Gender, Consumption, and Ideological Ambiguity in David Garrick’s Production of *The Orphan of China* (1759)’, *Theatre Journal*, 60/3 (2008), 383-407, at p. 398.

[19] Ibid., p. 383.

[20] Charles de Secondat, baron de Montesquieu, *The Spirit of Laws*, ed. David Wallace Carrithers (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977). p. xliii.

However, Zamti's' patriotic zeal is not the outcome of top-down political control, nor does it reflect a lack of freedom in action as the prologue suggests. In much of the play, China is leaderless. While Zaphimri, the orphan of China, finally ascends to the throne, Zamti takes care to warn the new king against despotism:

> […] each bad action of a king
> Extends beyond his life, and acts again
> Its tyranny o'er ages yet unborn.
> To error mild, severe to guilt, protect
> The helpless innocent; and learn to feel
> The best delight of serving human kind.
> Be these, my prince, thy arts; be these thy cares,
> And live the father of a willing people. (V. i)

Zamti's advice for Zaphimri to be a king of people's hearts resonates with the need to act righteously between the ruler and the ruled in 'The Five Bonds'. This is, indeed, the real cause of Zamti's zeal for his country. Zamti acts upon what he believes to be the just principle: he needs to save his country in order to save more families within it, even if that must be done at the cost of sacrificing his own family.

The play opens when the two boys – unaware of their real identities – have grown up into twenty-year-old young men. Both are anxious to save China at the point of another war with the Tartars. In the opening scene, Etan speaks passionately to Zamti about his willingness to save China at the expense of his own life:

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[21] 'The Five Constants' are benevolence, justice, proper rites, knowledge and integrity. 'The Five Bonds' are ruler to ruled, father to son, husband to wife, elder brother to younger brother, friend to friend. Each of the participants in these relationships are excepted to follow specific duties that are prescribed to them.

> Could Etan's fall appease the tyrant's wrath,
> A willing victim he would yield his life.[22] (I. i)

In response to Etan's impassioned claim, and all the time bearing the secret fact that Etan is the only living descendent to the throne of China, Zamti warns his adopted son against strong feelings: 'This zeal / So fervid in a stranger's cause' (I. i). Etan, who is still kept in the dark about his real identity at this stage, seems to be surprised by the comment of his father who is widely respected in the country for his own patriotism, and thus exclaims: 'A stranger […] My king a stranger! – Sir, you never meant it –' (I. i).

Indeed, Zamti does not mean it. The audience witnesses his almost cold-hearted insistence on saving his country and its orphaned prince. However, it is the inner struggles that Zamti experiences between private and public love that heighten the qualities of this tragic protagonist. In Act II Scene I, Zamti hears the news that Hamet is made a captive by the Tartar emperor and is in danger of being executed, for the Tartar emperor believes Hamet to be the Chinese prince, Zaphimri. Zamti 'bursts into tears' at the immediate danger to his own son Hamet, and feels wretched ('Thou wretched father'); however, he soon recollects himself by uttering the words: 'revenge, conquest, and freedom' (which is immediately corrected by his friend and Hamet's guardian, Morat, into 'conquest and freedom'), thus reminding himself of his country's revenge plot against the Tartars that had been set in motion twenty years ago.[23] As a result, Zamti speaks the following lines to Morat:

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[22] 'The tyrant' refers to Timurkaan, the Tartar emperor.

> And can'st thou think,
> To save one *vulgar life*, that Zamti now
> Will marr [sic] the vast design? – No; let him bleed,
> Let my boy bleed: – in such a cause as this
> I can resign my son – with tears of joy. (II. i, italics added)

In his battle between paternal feelings and patriotic passion, Zamti resolves to embrace the larger plan. Yang observes that 'the father's resolve to act in spite of his feelings makes him heroic precisely because bodily affect is a disruptive force with potential to undermine the civic virtue of patriotism'; she also argues that Zamti's treatment of his country's fate as priority is 'far from stoic'.[24] While paternal affection may be 'disruptive' to the proper implementation of the revenge plot, a parent's duty and the sense of patriotism are also mutually enforcing in the portrayal of a dramatic persona. The audience of the play is torn between the characters' intensity of feelings and the theatrical splendors that foster their imagination, where the consumption of the mind and material consumption become connected.

As a distressed mother whose maternal solicitude and grief are frequently found to be on the verge of disrupting the fulfilment of the revenge plot, Mandane is the character that is more likely to draw immediate sympathy from the audience and other characters in the play. However, Zamti's more silent and repressed emotional tumult may similarly evoke sympathetic feelings, particularly at a time when eighteenth-century Britain was under the influence of enlightenment philosophies and rationalist thinking. In fact, the idea of keeping balance between feeling and rationality was not a foreign one. Perhaps one of the reasons why *The Orphan of China* was welcomed on the eighteenth-century British stage was its power to evoke sympathy. In *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1738-40), David Hume considers sympathy to be the chief source of moral distinctions:

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[23] Just before his death in the war against the Tartars twenty years ago, the late Chinese king has asked Zamti to keep the baby prince safe and bring him up virtuous, as 'Virtue will rouze him to a great revenge; / Or failing – Virtue shall still make him happy.' (III. i).
[24] Yang, *Performing China*, p. 153.

> No quality of human nature is more remarkable, both in itself and in its consequences, than that propensity we have to sympathize with others, and to receive by communication their inclination and sentiments, however different from, or even contrary to our own.[25]

As a performance of sentiments, the play in a sense embraces differences in culture and customs, and enables the British audience of a theatricalized story about China to direct a self-reflective gaze inward.

Perhaps one of the reasons why tragic drama in the eighteenth century ceased to have the power and appeal that it held during the Renaissance is the period's attention to rationality. While tragedy often lends itself to the expression of deep and intense feelings, the Enlightenment placed greater emphasis on an individual's control of their own actions. Raymond Williams suggests that there is a denial of traditional tragedy in the Romantic period, due to the age's preoccupation with 'a renewal and a renewed assertion of individual energy'.[26] Accordingly, Williams observes that

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[25] David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, 2nd ed., ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (New York: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 316.

[26] Raymond Williams, *Modern Tragedy*, p. 120. The exact years covered in the Romantic period have been defined differently by scholars. For example, in *Forging Romantic China*, Kitson sees the British Romantic period spanning 1760 to 1840. For some other scholars, the period comes a little later. Although *The Orphan of China* may not strictly belong to the Romantic period, it is the product of the

> The Romantic desire for redemption and regeneration was given, in this tendency, a more or less precise social definition: when man was at the limits which ordinarily produced tragedy he became conscious of their nature and could begin to abolish them.[27]

While Murphy is well educated enough to be familiar with dramatic conventions, he is also literary enough to know that one can shape and play around such conventions.[28] Despite the deaths of its dramatic protagonists, Zamti and Mandane, the conclusion of *The Orphan of China* also witnesses the murder of the 'villain' – their enemy, the Tartar emperor. And the final restoration of order in this play is the outcome and fulfillment of Zamti's revenge plot. Perhaps Zamti has never truly left the stage. His decease is more of a sacrifice to a rightful cause than of the outcome of a tragic flaw. In the last moments of his life, Zamti comments on 'these strong vicissitudes of grief and joy', meaning the death of his wife and the Chinese orphan's restoration to the throne (V. i). The mixed feelings of pleasure and grief on the part of the character are passed on to the audience, and both parties become conscious of the juxtaposition of suffering, suspense and reward. By calling his play 'a tragedy' in an eighteenth-century context, in addition to a historical development of the idea of tragedy, Murphy justifies his innovative approach to the dramatic conventions. *The Orphan of China* not only offers an insight into a historical moment in Chinese culture, but also engages with changing ideas of tragic drama in Britain at the time. Such an intercultural approach may be

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years leading up to the conditions that some critics state about Romantic drama, and it already bears similar features in its sentiments and techniques.

[27] Ibid., p. 121.

[28] For example, Murphy was an able classicist (who translated *Tacitus*) and was well acquainted with Johnson. Richard B. Schwartz, 'Arthur Murphy', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://www.oxforddnb.com>.

said to account for the work's general acceptability in a foreign culture.

The Chinese characters' recurring invocations to heaven throughout the play indicate the importance of spiritual belief to them. In Act I Scene I, upon hearing about the imminent danger of their country, Mandane and Zamti both kneel and pray for heaven's protection and for the safety of the royal prince. In Act II Scene I, Zamti requests Morat to keep the secret of Hamet's real identity for the sake of his worship of the holy power and his love of his country:

> Does thy poor bleeding country still remain
> Dear to thy heart? – Say, dost thou still revere
> That holy Pow'r above, Supreme of beings,
> Mistaken by the Bonzée, whom our fathers
> Worship'd in happier days! (II. i)

Moreover, the play concludes with Zaphimri – now king of China – thanking heaven for blessing him with protection: 'heav'n, in its own hour, can bring relief […] And prove the Orphan's guardian to the last' (V. i). Zamti describes Etan in Act II Scene I: 'He [Etan] fares […] like a God on earth'. On the one hand, this metaphor can be understood as praising the virtue of a person – as when Zamti is similarly depicted as a 'godlike man' by Hamet and Zaphimri respectively, in Act II Scene II and Act II Scene I. On the other hand, the connection between Zamti's worship of heavenly powers and his allegiance to China's monarchy reflects the important role faith plays in this man's love of his country.

In *The Orphan of China*, Zamti's strict allegiance to imperial China is understood by his wife to be 'barb'rous' and 'inhuman' (II. ii). Responding to Zamti's warning against betrayal of the sacred kings if she reveals the truth about the orphan of China, Mandane claims that 'Mine is a mother's cause […] Superior to your right divine of kings! (II. ii)' Mandane's confrontation with Zamti is dramatically intensified by the playwright, which is in contrast to the absence of the mother in the original Chinese opera. Kitson observes that Zamti's strict morality is moderated by Mandane's natural and maternal feelings, just as 'Chinese patriotism is to be humanized […] by British sensibility and constitutionalism, into a compassionate and benevolent ideology.'[29] Ou points out that this confrontation reflects the political tensions between England and France during the Seven Years' War, and that Murphy's decision to have this play performed during this period is politically charged.[30]

However, Mandane and Zamti, despite their very different approaches to saving the life of their son (Hamet), are not two individuals representing opposite values; they are husband and wife who love each other and would eventually die for each other. Both the husband and the wife in this play experience intense struggles between what they would wish for as parents and what they can do to serve the greater good for the nation. It is true that Zamti appears to hold utilitarian moral values, but all the time he knows that suffering is unavoidable, and that he as an individual needs to make some sacrifice in order to save the much greater number of his countrymen from ruthless invasions by the Tartars. As for Mandane, her maternal impulsion is recollected when Timurkaan charges Zamti with treason for hiding the truth about China's orphan. When she faces the painful choice between saving Hamet (her biological son) and thus giving out Etan (her adopted son) as the real Chinese prince, and protecting Etan but watching Hamet executed in his place, Mandane refuses to selfishly save Hamet's life, and chooses to go to prison with her husband. Mandane refuses to betray her husband, and she praises Zamti's 'noble, all-accomplish'd mind' (III. i). While the couple are imprisoned by Timurkaan, Zamti, too, expresses his love and adoration of Mandane's virtues, namely, her 'faithful[ness]' and 'matchless excellence' (V. i). Essentially, there is more common ground between Zamti and Mandane than there is difference. Both of them experience ambivalence and inner conflicts in those critical moments that might bring enormous change to their lives or the destiny of their country. Both of them aspire to freedom but are clearly aware of its distinction from self-will. Both of them choose selflessly to sacrifice their individual interests for the good of the nation. While Zamti's decease is caused by the physical torture of the Tartars, Mandane commits suicide at the scene of her husband's torment.[31] Despite their initial disagreements, which are given undue attention by many critics, they die conciliatory deaths with enhanced mutual understanding and love for each other.

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[29] Kitson, p. 20.

[30] Ou, 'Gender, Consumption, and Ideological Ambiguity', p. 386.

A long letter written by Murphy to Voltaire is attached to the published version of *The Orphan of China* in 1759. Voltaire's French adaptation of this Chinese story was performed in Paris just four years before Murphy's production. In this letter, Murphy reveals that his play is essentially different from Voltaire's, by demonstrating his disagreement with certain details in the French version. The letter's opening demonstrates Murphy's clear awareness of the tense political atmosphere between

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[31] In Act V Scene I, Mirvan reports to his fellow Chinese men about the Tartar's treatment of Zamti and Mandane after they are seized: '— they seiz'd on Zamti, / And bound him on the wheel: all frantic at the sight, / Mandane plung'd a poniard in her heart, / And at her husband's feet expir'd' (V. i).

England and France in this period:

> A Letter to you from an English author will carry with it the appearance of corresponding with the enemy; not only as the two nations are at present involved in a difficult and important war, but also because in many of your late writings you seem determined to live in a state of hostility with the British nation. (Letter, p. 89)

The Orphan of China was performed during the Seven Years' War, in a year when the British troops triumphed on all fronts in their battles with the French.[32] On account of this particular historical context, some critics have argued that one of Arthur Murphy's intentions in this play is to praise England's constitutional monarchy over French absolutist monarchy.[33] While this is a play that is politically charged and which deploys China as a medium for Eurocentric concerns, it is nonetheless a literary text that conveys shared sentiments across eastern and western cultures. In both Murphy's letter to Voltaire and Voltaire's response to Murphy (published in the same year), literary discussion predominates in the two authors' correspondences.[34]

Right at the opening of his letter to Voltaire, Murphy emphasises that his adaptation of the Chinese story is distinctively English: 'I hold myself in some sort accountable to M. De VOLTAIRE for the departure I have made from his plan, and the substitution of a new fable of my own' (Letter, p. 89). Moreover, Murphy claims in the letter that he is not apologetic to Voltaire for 'some occasional insertions of sentiment from [Voltaire's] elegant performance', as he has followed the examples of many admired writers in both France and England (Letter, p. 94). Furthermore, arguing from the English side, Murphy implicitly criticises Voltaire for freely borrowing from Shakespeare whilst pointing out Shakespeare's faults: 'M. De Voltaire has a particular satisfaction in descanting on the faults of the most wonderful genius that ever existed since the era of HOMER […] when he is under obligations to him' (Letter, p. 95). Knowing that his version of the play came out after Voltaire's French version, and that the play was performed in the midst of the Seven Years' War, Murphy's letter is an example of self-justification at a critical time of political (and cultural) rivalry, as well as an attempt to 'reinvent' China after his French predecessor.

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[32] 1759 was the *annus mirabilis* ('year of miracle'). Ou, 'Gender, Consumption, and Ideological Ambiguity', p. 385.

[33] Kitson, 'Eighteenth-century Adaptations of China'; Ou, 'Gender, Consumption, and Ideological Ambiguity'.

[34] Voltaire, 'A Letter from Mons. De Voltaire to the author of *The Orphan of China*' (London: I. Pottinger, 1759), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/>. All subsequent references to this letter will appear in-text.

Murphy also admits that he has been a little disappointed by Voltaire's adaptation of the play, suggesting that it is lacking in passion, and that Voltaire unfortunately falls into 'the hackneyed and ineffectual stratagem of many modern writers':

> I heard with pleasure that M. DE VOLTAIRE had produced at Paris his L'ORPHELIN DE LA CHINE: I ardently longed for a perusal of the piece, expecting that such a writer would certainly seize all the striking incidents which might naturally grow out of so pregnant a story, *and that he would leave no source of passion unopened* […] But to you, who have told us that Love should reign a very tyrant in Tragedy, or not appear there at all, being unfit for the second place; to you, who have said that NERO should not hide himself behind a tapestry, to overhear the conversation of his mistress and his rival […] To fill up the long career of a tragedy with this episodic love must certainly have been

> the motive that led you into this error. (Letter, pp. 90-92, italics added)

Murphy's critique of Voltaire's portrayal of love refers to the latter's making the Tartar emperor (Gengis-Kan) a former suitor of Idame (name of Zamti's wife in Voltaire's play). When they first meet before the play's opening, Gengis-Kan is a fugitive who flees to China and begs assistance from the Chinese court. Despite her feeling attracted to Gengis-Kan's valiant appearance, Idame declines his proposal of marriage due to her family's objection to his foreign identity. Having now become a powerful conqueror, Gengis-Kan comes back to claim authority over China, and offers his love to Idame once more, only to be refused again.

In *L'Orphelin de la Chine*, Voltaire makes the Tartar emperor the central character. The orphan of China remains a baby throughout the play.[35] In Murphy's play, the Tartar emperor is killed by the grown-up orphan of China, whereas in Voltaire's play, Gengis-Kan willingly converts to an admirer of Chinese virtues. At the end of Voltaire's play, Gengis-Kan is moved by Zamti and Idame's loyalty and love for each other as well as for their country, and drops his weapon. The closing lines of the play are Gengis-Kan's response to Idame's question as to why he has undertaken a fundamental change in the end, to which he answers: 'Your Virtues. These to friendship turn'd my hate, And taught me, TO BE GOOD, IS TO BE GREAT.'[36]

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[35] The timeline of Voltaire's play is also criticised by Murphy. In his letter to Voltaire, Murphy observes that 'by making the Orphan and the Mandarine's son children in their cradles, it appeared to me that you had stripped yourself of two characters, which might be produced in an amiable light, so as to engage the affections of their auditors (Letter, p. viii).'

[36] *The Orphan of China: A Tragedy*, translated from the French of M. De Voltaire (London: R. Baldwin, 1761), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/>, Act V, Scene vi. All subsequent references to this play will appear in-text.

Voltaire's play seems to offer a more humanized delineation of the Tartar emperor, and also demonstrates its approval of Chinese ethics. By comparison, Murphy's Tartar emperor is also conquered in the end, yet not through reform, but through force and death. In Murphy's play, barbarian power (i.e. the Tartar army) does not prevail, but it is uncertain whether Chinese philosophical and moral ideals receive full praise. The tragic and untimely deaths of both Zamti and Mandane at the end of Murphy's play seem to highlight the cost of patriarchal and paternal passions alike.

In Voltaire's response to Murphy's letter, 'A Letter from Mons. De Voltaire to the author of *The Orphan of China*', Voltaire not only observes that parts of his play are misinterpreted by Murphy, but also reviews and criticizes Murphy's play in great detail. In his criticism, Voltaire places particular emphasis on Murphy's characterization of Timurkan, the Tartar emperor, which is not surprising, given Voltaire's own very different portrayal of the same figure in his own work. Voltaire points out that there are too many inconsistencies in Murphy's depiction of Timurkan. For example, Voltaire suggests that it is hardly convincing that Timurkan would choose Mirvan, a Chinese whose whole family has been killed by Timurkan, to be a senior officer in his own army. In this play, Mirvan acts as China's spy on account of his personal hatred of Timurkan, and the Tartar emperor's murder by Zaphimri is enabled by Mirvan's betrayal. For Voltaire, the decision to make Mirvan Timurkan's officer and close friend is illogical: 'The rough northern Conqueror Timurkan must have wanted common Sense, to trust a Man whom he had outraged in so cruel a Manner […] surely 'tis too much to represent him as acting like a downright Idiot'

(Voltaire's Letter, p. 9). Voltaire describes Murphy's play as 'a monstrous Farce, to be equaled by none in Absurdity', and states that Murphy is indeed – as he humbly (but not truthfully) describes himself in his letter to Voltaire – 'the worst Poet' in Britain (Voltaire's Letter, pp.24, 32-33).[37]

Despite their strong disagreement on plot and characterization in each other's adaptations of the same story, Murphy and Voltaire's correspondence highlights the Chinese text's ability to provoke intercultural responses. The Chinese story is here subject to important intellectual and cultural debates. While debate in this particular instance is tainted by sentiments of political rivalry, it focuses on literature and the theatre, and is fundamentally inspired by a work of art from China. Both Murphy and Voltaire had read Prémare's translation of the prose section of the original fourteenth-century Chinese opera, *The Little Orphan of the Family of Tchao*, collected by Du Halde in *The General History of China* (1735).[38] In contrast to the original Chinese opera in which the father's baby son is put straight to death after birth in the place of the baby prince, both Voltaire and Murphy adopt a more humane and optimistic approach to presenting the fate of the Chinese characters, but, in the meantime, they intensify the painful struggles between love of nation and personal love for the play's protagonists. Ou argues that

> […] the conflicts between Mandarins and Tartars in the

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[37] Voltaire's comment here appears to be personal and prejudiced. Murphy's plays were also largely successful, and he was a very versatile literary figure in eighteenth-century Britain. Murphy had taken the roles of, for example, editor, biographer, critic, translator, and dramatist. Schwartz suggests that Murphy 'may be compared with Oliver Goldsmith for the breadth and polish of his work'. Information taken from Richard B. Schwartz, 'Arthur Murphy', *ODNB*.

[38] Du Halde's version of the Chinese play is mentioned by Voltaire in his preface to *L'Orphelin de la Chine*, and by Murphy in his letter to Voltaire.

> play represent contemporaneous tensions between England and France; that Mandane, who opposes her husband's absolutist patriotism and patriarchal authority, is the author's spokesperson against Chinese and French anti-egalitarianism.[39]

In the context of Ou's argument, China is adopted as a means of critique for the more immediate tensions between England and France in the latter half of the eighteenth century. The fact that such criticism is carried out by Murphy, an Irish author, makes the role of China all the more interesting. While the original Chinese story is founded on a rivalry between two senior officials in China, both Voltaire's and Murphy's adaptations change the scale of rivalry from a state affair into warfare between two nations (i.e. between the Chinese and the Tartars). This was partly due to the historical and political contexts in which the two authors wrote: they both wrote in the midst of the Seven Years' War, and the theme of war in their plays would inevitably provoke attention and heighten the sentiments of their fellow countrymen. Historically, the Mongol invasion of China – which was started by Gengis-Kan in 1205 – ended in the Mongol empire's conquest of the whole of China and the establishment of the Chinese Yuan Dynasty (a conquest dynasty) by 1279. As a Yuan dynasty opera, *The Little Orphan of the Family of Tchao* would not have been allowed to depict the theme of the Tartars' defeat; however, the seven-decade-long warfare between China and the Mongol empire could well have become a source of interest for the Europeans.[40] Despite their mutual dislike of each other's adaptation of the Chinese play, Murphy and Voltaire had several qualities in common. It is their shared interest and literary adventures with the Chinese theme that made this production travel in time and space, while contributing to the cross-cultural encounters between Europe and the East.

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[39] Ou, 'Gender, Consumption, and Ideological Ambiguity', p. 383.

[40] Another Tartar-conquest play of the period is Michael Clancy's *Hermon, Prince of Chorea: Or, The Extravagant Zealot* (1746). Cited in Yang, *Performing China*, p. 172.

In his review of *The Orphan of China* in May 1759, which was published in the *Critical Review* a month after the play was first performed at Drury Lane, London, Oliver Goldsmith criticises the lack of emotion and imagination in authentic Chinese literature:

> of all nations that ever felt the influence of the inspiring goddess, perhaps the Chinese are to be placed in the lowest class […] their productions are the most phlegmatic that can be imagined […] there is not a single attempt to address the imagination, or influence the passions.[41]

Such prejudice against Chinese literary style is clearly reflected in Goldsmith's own work about China, *The Citizen of the World* – a collection of pseudo-letters from a Chinese philosopher in London to his friend in Peking. Most of this work is presented as flat narratives; the protagonist's feelings, whenever mentioned, are rarely expanded or reflected upon. Goldsmith's argument about Chinese literature is hardly convincing, as it seems to be based only on his reading of *The Orphan of China*, yet even this text alone contains examples that would undermine his argument. In his review, Goldsmith also points out that Voltaire's version of this play – which came out earlier than the English version and had been read by Murphy – already deviates from the 'calm insipidity of [the] Eastern original' for 'all the colouring of French poetry'; Goldsmith further observes that ‘our English poet has deviated still further’.[42] However, the rich and varied musical arias in the original Chinese opera are the main sources for conveying the characters’ different kinds of emotions. While music is left out in the original European translations of the Chinese production, it is reasonable to question the accuracy of any comments that cast a negative shadow on the Chinese work’s portrayal of feelings, for few people in Europe of the period would have watched the Chinese opera performed in its entirety.

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[41] Oliver Goldsmith, review of *The Orphan of China*, *Critical Review* (May 1759), *Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith* (Vol. I), ed. Arthur Friedman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), p. 171.

Describing the first night’s performance of Murphy’s play in his review, Goldsmith observes that although the production pleased most of the audience, ‘few of the situations were capable of getting within the soul.’[43] The audience seems to have been affected by superficial elements in the play, such as ‘the well-conducted scenery’ and ‘the glowing imagery’, but were not affected ‘with the luxury of woe’.[44] Furthermore, Goldsmith attributes all the beauties of the play to Murphy, while blaming all the faults on the performance as if they have ‘proceeded from vicious imitation’.[45] Such comments reinforce Goldsmith’s prejudice against the original Chinese text as well as his doubt about the level of merit that a play about China could possibly achieve.

Such an attitude is also reflected in the ‘Advertisement’ of Du Halde’s translated version of this Chinese production, in which the speaker states that Chinese plays are inferior to western drama in terms of literary merits.[46] In this advertisement, the speaker observes that 'the three Unities of Time, Place and Action are not to be expected, nor yet the other Rules observed by us to give regularity to Works of this sort'; this appears to be preparing the audience to expect less from this play in terms of its literary merits. While pointing out that the specimen of the Chinese play is 'never so much differing from our own', the speaker does not omit mentioning the music part of the original Chinese opera. 'The singing', he describes, 'is to express some great Emotion of the Soul, such as Joy, Grief, Anger, or Despair'. He admits that the songs are 'full of Allusions to things unknown to us', which accounts for the omission of the musical arias during the process of translation (Advertisement). Essentially, in Du Halde's translated version of the original Chinese production – the source text that all later adaptations are based on – the gap in understanding between eastern and western cultures is already identified.[47] While most western literary critics might feel it hard to articulate the mechanisms of an original Chinese production, they must also accept the fact that their understanding is hindered by a lack of well-informed knowledge of Chinese art and culture.

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[42] Ibid., p. 172.
[43] Ibid., p. 173.
[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.
[46] *The Little Orphan of the Family of Tchao*, in *The General History of China*, ed. Du Halde (London:

In China, *The Little Orphan of the Family of Tchao* is categorized as 'zaju', a form of prosimetric literature that was prevalent in the Yuan Dynasty (c.1271-1368). The zaju generally came from scholars of deep learning and was thus regarded as a high form of art. However, in terms of the historical development of different forms of Chinese literature, drama does not stand as a foundational genre, while poetry and

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J. Watts: 1736), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco>. All subsequent references to this play will appear in-text.

[47] It might be helpful to remind the reader here that the original Chinese production was first translated into French.

prose have always been the predominant forms of cultural production.[48] As a result, it is understandable that the Chinese play might have been perceived as inferior to standard European plays, for drama was not as developed a literary genre in Chinese literature as it was in European literature and culture in the period.

Murphy's portrayal of Mandane as a woman who is free and dares to speak for herself in the public sphere reflects his awareness of the improvement of the status of women in his society. The fact that this play was still being performed at least into the nineteenth century demonstrates its generally popular reception; according to a nineteenth-century list of female characters, Mandane, the Chinese heroine, is identified as one of the finest roles for an actress.[49] Mrs Yates, the famous eighteenth-century actress who played the role of Mandane in the play's first performances, represents an emerging class of independent women who worked as professionals with an independent income. Mandane demonstrates uncommon resolution and strength in spite of her maternal tenderness. For example, she confronts the Tartar emperor and soon makes him believe that Hamet is her son. She also fearlessly asks her husband to take her life with a dagger (which she has secretly prepared) during their imprisonment, in order to avoid the humiliation of execution by the enemy. The second frontispiece of this work illustrates Mandane resolutely holding the dagger and trying to hand it to her husband, while Zamti appears lost and slightly petrified.[50]

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[48] Information about the zaju is taken from Stephen H. West and Wilt L. Idema, *The Orphan of Zhao and Other Yuan Plays* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2014), p. 32 and p. 34.

[49] 'Arthur Murphy', 'Buried Poets' in *Dublin University Magazine*, 89 (Jan.–June 1877): 523–24. Cited in Ou, 'Gender, Consumption, and Ideological Ambiguity', p. 387.

[50] See the Appendices of this thesis for a copy of this frontispiece, produced in 1797, taken from the play's 1797 edition. There are no illustrations in the first published edition of this play (1759 edition). The addition of this illustration to a latter edition reinforces the importance of the critical moment of

According to a number of contemporary commentaries on Mrs Yates' acting style, the actress was almost unanimously described as hard, stately and majestic;[51] such character traits made her a suitable match for the role of Mandane, who is similarly firm and dignified. In his letter to Voltaire, Murphy shows his approval of the choice of actress for this play:

> though a weak state of health deprived the play of so fine an actress as Mrs. CIBBER, you would have beheld in MANDANE a figure that would be an ornament to any stage in Europe, and you would have acknowledged that her Acting promises to equal the elegance of her person. (Letter, p. 96)

The illness of Mrs Cibber (Susannah Cibber), another well-known actress on the eighteenth-century English stage, provided Mrs Yates with the chance to play the role of Mandane in the first production of *The Orphan of China*. Indeed, Yates might have proved more suitable an actress than Cibber on this occasion, due to her more majestic acting style, in comparison to the tenderness of Cibber.[52] Mary Ann Yates's life story, and, in particular, her involvement with the theatre, demonstrates a woman's desire and effort to raise her own social status in a patriarchal context. When advised by Thomas Sheridan to abandon her acting ambitions after her unpromising début in 1753, Yates carried on pursuing her goals and joined David Garrick at Drury Lane. Her subsequent marriage to Richard Yates, one of Garrick's stalwarts, helped her rise in theatrical status. Mrs Yates's success in the role of Mandane in *The Orphan of China*

Mandane's resolution and bravery.

[51] Ou, 'Gender, Consumption, and Ideological Ambiguity', p. 393.

[52] Peter Thomson, 'Yates, Mary Ann (1728–1787)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://www.oxforddnb.com>. Most details about Mrs Yates's theatrical experience mentioned in this paragraph are taken from this source; exceptions are cited separately.

further strengthened her importance to the theatre. Yates's excellent grasp of her role in this play was also due to the playwright's instruction, as Murphy privately coached Yates as Mandane during her preparation for the role.[53] In his biographical entry on Mrs Yates, Peter Thomson describes Yates's uncommon resolution to succeed as an actress and her fearlessness in collaborating (and even competing) with her male counterparts: 'Once established, Mary Ann Yates was never afraid to stand up for herself, overruling her more timid husband if necessary.'[54] Garrick, the theatre manager, found Yates troublesome, but needed her support especially in tragedies.[55] In the end, Yates parted ways with Garrick in defiance of the manager's over-inventive ambitions. By joining Garrick's theatrical adversaries soon after, Yates demonstrated her strong and rebellious personal qualities, and above all, how she was in control of her own life. Moreover, in 1773, Yates became a member of the new management team of the King's Theatre, and jointly campaigned for permission for her theatre to stage operas alongside plays.[56] Despite the ultimate failure of the campaign itself, Yates was able to assert her sense of leadership and of her own value through her new role as the theatre manager. In a record of her visit to the King's Theatre, Fanny Burney is quick to discern Mrs Yates's controlling temperament. Burney reveals that when her party is ushered into a very magnificent apartment, she finds Yates 'seated like a stage queen, surrounded with gay courtiers and dressed with the utmost elegance and brilliancy', while Mr Yates 'presumed not to take the liberty in his own house to act any other part than that of waiter.'[57]

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[53] Murphy acted between 1754 and 1756. He made his acting debut as Othello – also a tragic character – at Covent Garden. Richard B. Schwartz, 'Arthur Murphy', *ODNB*.

[54] Thomson, 'Yates, Mary Ann', *ODNB*.

[55] It is believed that Yates's comparative inflexibility in performance made her more suitable to act in tragedies. During her employment in Garrick's company, Yates performed a number of leading roles in Shakespeare's plays, such as Cleopatra in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Cordelia in *King Lear*, and Desdemona in *Othello*. Thomson, 'Yates, Mary Ann', *ODNB*.

[56] It was rare at the time to have both opera and stage play performed in the same building. Ian Woodfield, *Opera and Drama in Eighteenth-Century London: The King's Theatre, Garrick and the Business of Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 29-31.

The sense of independence and ambition found in Mrs Yates, combining with the increased publicity of actresses in the London theatre, signifies women's growing influence in eighteenth-century British society. Thomson suggests that William Godwin's admiration of Mrs Yates is a possible proof of the actress' implicit championing of women's rights through her own life story.[58] While Mrs Yates might have performed a version of herself in *The Orphan of China*, her performance outside of the character of Mandane – in the play's conclusion – seems to indicate her broader cultural awareness. Despite the fact that she is merely performing lines written by the playwright, Yates's possible awareness of the greater freedom enjoyed by British women in comparison to eastern women's lower social status in the period might have influenced her fulfillment of a haughty role in the play's ending.

In the epilogue of the play, the sincerity of Mandane the character is marred by the actress' sarcastic and haughty speech. In the epilogue, Mrs Yates comes up to the stage again, and engages the audience in what she calls 'our dear small talk' (Epilogue, n. p.). The actress not only mimics the backward customs of foot binding of the Chinese women of the time, which shows restraints of physical freedom, but also depicts the appearances and lives of Chinese people in a rude and mocking way that is racially charged:

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[57] Fanny Burney, *The Early Journals and Letters*, ed. Lars E. Troide (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1988-2003), II, 55-6.

[58] Thomson, 'Yates, Mary Ann', *ODNB*.

> They're all broad foreheads, and pigs eyes at best.
> And then they lead such strange, such formal lives! —
> — A little more at home than English wives:
> Lest the poor things shou'd roam, and prove untrue,
> They all are crippled in the tiney [sic] shoe. (Epilogue, n. p.)

Such a deliberate distancing mechanism adopted in the epilogue of the play appears to be highly incongruous with the poignant denouement of the Chinese tragedy; consequently, the sincerity of the playwright in his depiction of a historical Chinese story is put into question. It is clear that the epilogue carries the function of alienating the British from the Chinese by implying the former's perceived superior qualities.

Coming up to the stage as an actress outside of the character she plays, Mrs Yates breaks the dramatic illusion formed in the main part of the play. However, by distancing herself from Mandane the character as well as the Chinese women she speaks of, Mrs Yates does not make herself more likeable to the audience. If the epilogue does not reflect well on either the Chinese or the play's leading actress, then the contrast it seems to make between China and Britain may not be intended as entirely opposite. Perhaps Murphy himself does not really endorse the words in the epilogue. While the frequent dashes (both at the end of a line and in the middle of a line) in the printed version of the epilogue intensify the air of affectation and mockery by their creation of prolonged gaps in between the speech, part of the content conveys a deeper and more serious level of meaning that may not be grasped at first reading.

In the second stanza of the epilogue, the actress alludes to a number of conventions of love in English plays, by slighting the Chinese original for its lack of such conventions:

> How cou'd this bard successful hope to prove?
> So many heroes, – and not one in love!
> No suitor here to talk of flames that thrill;
> To say the civil thing — "Your eyes so kill!" —
> No ravisher, to force us — to our will! (Epilogue, n. p.)

The last line in the quoted section above implies that the British women in question are willing to be seduced and only fake modesty towards their lovers. The rhyming triplet in this stanza – which appears a few times in the epilogue – is unusual, and the extra rhyme appears to create a comic effect, making the speech brisker. The intentional use of the rhyming triplets is made obvious in the printed text by the way they are bracketed together.[59] In her description of the Chinese wives, the actress states that they are 'A little more at home than English wives' (Epilogue, n. p.). Although this comment may refer to the physical constraint of Chinese women caused by the old custom of foot-binding, it may also allude to a British woman's perceived weakness in sexual morality, especially when this comment is considered alongside the hint of sexual seduction in the first textual example quoted in this paragraph.

The representations of China in *The Orphan of China* are imbued with multiple layers of meanings, including those that are in contention with one another. The Tartars – China's enemy – are depicted in this play as barbarians who are ruled by a tyrant; the Chinese characters' resilience against Scythian invasion and strife for liberty are comparable to England's fortitude against France – a country ruled by an absolutist monarchy – in the time of the Seven Years' War. The historical story of China that is the basis of this play is used as a medium for literary and political contention between an English author and a French author. Both Murphy and Goldsmith – prolific Irish authors of the period – align themselves with the English in opposition to the French. Yet their identity as Irish writers who were making a living in England also associates them with the Chinese 'outsiders' that are portrayed in their own works. In a way, they were also 'strangers' in a 'foreign' country.

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[59] See the Appendices of this thesis for a copy of the epilogue, taken from the text version of the play when it was published in 1759.

Reflections on China signify active enquiries into Chinese culture in the contexts of the prevailing social, cultural and political concerns in western cultures. In the context of this chapter, theatrical consumptions of China in eighteenth-century Britain are largely about 'inventing' conceptions of China and using them to deliver messages about Britain itself. According to Adrienne Ward, there were sixty-eight dramas about China that had been presented on European stages in the eighteenth century, yet only *L' Orphelin de la Chine* and *The Orphan of China* were founded on an original Chinese production.[60] It was not until 1817 that another original Chinese production was adapted in Europe – John Francis Davis's *Lao sheng erh; or, An Heir in His Old Age*, but it was never performed.[61] For most eighteenth-century European dramatists who wrote about China, their productions might have undergone a process of cultural invention, in that the country they wrote about might not actually exist (or only existed in their imagination). The statistics above show that China was stimulating ways of thinking about manners, behaviours and society at large, even among people who had never been to China or come across original Chinese works of literature and art. China became an image to be enquired after, as well as manipulated.

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[60] Adrienne Ward, *Pagodas in Play: China on the Eighteenth-Century Italian Opera Stage* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2010), p. 15.

[61] Kitson, *Forging Romantic China*, p. 220.

Four years before Murphy's adaptation of *The Orphan of China* was performed at Drury Lane Theatre, the same theatre manager, David Garrick, brought a French ballet – *The Chinese Festival (Les Fetes Chinoises)* (1755) – from Paris to London with the intention of stimulating the fashion for chinoiserie through a performance that featured elaborate costumes and spectacles that were regarded then as authentically Chinese. However, *The Chinese Festival* led to an infamous riot in the history of eighteenth-century English theatre, in which furious rioters destroyed the expensive costumes and sets used in the play and decried the presence of French performers in London on the eve of the Seven Years' War.[62] Commenting on the riot in London, Kitson argues that 'The crowd's hostility was largely politically motivated but xenophobia and nationalism also played their part.'[63] At the outset, the riot intensified the political tensions between the English and the French during the war; yet the theatrical consumption of Chinese-themed materials also played a role in this struggle, as England attempted to claim dominance over chinoiserie works of art against a Frenchified version of the chinoiserie style.

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[62] Ibid., p. 217.
[63] Ibid.

In Garrick's production of Murphy's *The Orphan of China* four years after the theatrical riot in London, the audience saw a distinctively English play about China that deliberately alienated itself from French influences. This is demonstrated through both Murphy's letter to Voltaire, as well as the play's apparent fascination with Chinese material objects while trying to make light of them in the meantime (as highlighted in the epilogue). In his letter to Voltaire, Murphy shows his satisfaction with the stage display in this production: 'if you had been present at the representation, you would have seen a theatrical splendor conducted with a *bienséance* unknown to the *scene Francoise* (Letter, p. xi).' Essentially, in both its form and content, *The Orphan of China* reflects the playwright's attempt to re-write a traditional Chinese story and establish the play's own reputation beyond what was already established by his French predecessor.

According to an eighteenth-century critic of Murphy's *The Orphan of China*, the play also boasted 'a magnificent set of Chinese scenes'.[64] This critic commented on the authenticity of the Chinese interiors on a London stage, by claiming that 'an eastern traveller would imagine himself at Pekin and a Cockney in a new world'.[65] Furthermore, Murphy also recalled Garrick's preparation of 'a magnificent set of Chinese scenes, and the most becoming dresses' for his play.[66] The play's Chinese sets and costumes were possibly not inferior to those adopted in *The Chinese Festival*, but it was the production's clear stance against French influences that saved it from another riot. The image of China, or the broader concept of the East, perhaps mostly brought ideas of travel and distance for eighteenth-century British authors and audiences. Therefore, it is understandable that some British people of the period were more attracted to the 'adventure' taken by the play from the Far East to Europe – which travelled in both geographical and literary spaces – and were fascinated by the mere spectacle of China.

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[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.

In light of the literary styles that were prevalent in Britain at the time, the eighteenth century was a great age for satire. The period witnessed the production of numerous well-known English works of satire, such as Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* (1727), Alexander Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* (1714) and Henry Fielding's *Shamela* (1741). Some of the satires were written to produce laughter and in the name of comedy, and almost all of them implied the need for some corrective, often in the form of moral or social evaluation. The interplay between the observer and the observed is also important to satires: at one level the observer assumes superiority over the observed and pokes fun and mockery at them; at another level the observers themselves become the observed and undergo a process of self-evaluation. In his *Representing China on the Historical London Stage: From Orientalism to Intercultural Performance*, Dongshin Chang invents the term 'Chinaface satire', in which 'the Chinese appearance is a façade, and the British themselves are ridiculed'.[67] Chang argues that Chinaface satire had become an 'established British theatre practice', a way for people to make commentaries on contemporary British society through Chinese spectacle.[68] Although in the context of Chang's argument, knowledge of China was still not the primary concern in the English theatre of the eighteenth century, the adaptation of Chinese themes may be understood as something that had gone beyond a binary opposition between eastern and western cultures. Just like when the actress who has just played Mandane comes back onto the stage to deliver the mocking epilogue, with a pointed commentary on the restraint of Chinese women ('They all are crippled in the tiney [sic] shoe. / A hopeful scheme to keep a wife from madding'), she may also be implicitly questioning the actual freedoms enjoyed by women of her own country, despite their being 'ever gadding' (Epilogue, n. p.).

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[67] Dongshin Chang, *Representing China on the Historical London Stage: From Orientalism to Intercultural Performance* (New York: Routledge, 2015), p. 7.

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[68] Ibid.

Chapter Three

‘The Chinese and we are pretty much alike’: Oliver Goldsmith’s *The Citizen of the World* and Chinese Visitors in Britain

The origin of *The Citizen of the World*

In January 1760, Goldsmith began contributing a series of pseudo-Chinese letters to the newly established magazine, the *Public Ledger, or Daily Register of Commerce and Intelligence*. According to an agreement reached with John Newbery (one of the magazine’s proprietors), Goldsmith was required to ‘furnish papers of an amusing character twice a week, for which according to contemporary statements, he was to receive a salary of 100 l. (pound sterling) per annum.’[1] After their serial publication, these letters were carefully revised by Goldsmith, and were collectively published as *The Citizen of the World* on 1 May 1762.[2] *The Citizen of the World* holds double-edged connections to China. It is at once a piece of Chinoiserie and a serious reflection on both British and Chinese cultures in the eighteenth century.

It appears that part of the reason why this work gained much attention was its association with China, which made it a form of Chinoiserie in the public eye. While Chinoiserie is an interpretation or imitation of Chinese customs and materials in Europe, Goldsmith manipulated the cult of Chinoserie in order to draw public attention to his work. This was despite his ambivalence towards this phenomenon. Ros Ballaster points out an irony in the publication of *The Citizen of the World*, that

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[1] James Prior, *The Life of Oliver Goldsmith*, Vol. I, p. 356.

[2] Arthur Friedman, ‘Introduction’, in Oliver Goldsmith, *The Citizen of the World*, *Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith* [Vol. II], ed. Arthur Friedman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), p. xi.

> Lien Chi, as the product of Oliver Goldsmith's pen, might be seen as just another whimsical product of the taste for things Chinese, an object displayed by his author in pursuit of public reputation and to demonstrate his virtuosity.[3]

However, this irony, or paradox, in Goldsmith's writing about China does not necessarily suggest that the author's view of the ignorance of the British in their understanding of China is altogether fake or ineffective. The medium through which *The Citizen of the World* was published may follow – as Ballaster suggests – the current of taste for things Chinese in mid-eighteenth-century Britain; however, Goldsmith also employs his own idea of China, which was uniquely different from that held by most people of his time. Goldsmith claimed that China is not in essence such a distant and mysterious place as it had been assumed to be in the western imagination. In part a fabrication of encounters of a fictional Chinese traveller in London and composed in a century when Chinoiserie fashion was increasingly prevalent in Britain, the requirement for Goldsmith to write materials of 'an amusing character' seems to place the work's abilities to delight and entertain above all other factors. It is also probable that the inception of the Chinese letters enhanced the article's entertaining qualities due to its touch of exoticism and the influence of Chinoiserie. Peter Kitson observes that 'literary chinoiserie is embedded in an understanding of the material processes of global commerce and the implications of that process for both Britain and China.'[4] The interplay between Britain's expenditure on Chinese (or China-related) products and the development of literary Chinoiserie in British culture is a subtle one, as writers appear to both engage with and turn away from material consumption while they are employed in another, literary consumption. Goldsmith is an example of this phenomenon: one who disapproves of material Chinoiserie while practicing a literary version.

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[3] Ros Ballaster, *Fables of the East*, p. 261.

[4] Peter Kitson, 'Adaptations of China by Horace Walpole and Arthur Murphy', in *Romantic Adaptations*, p. 16.

In his letter to Robert Bryanton on 14 August 1758, Goldsmith states that 'I use Chinese names to show my own erudition, as I shall soon make our Chinese talk like an Englishman to show his'.[5] This claim suggests that Goldsmith already had a Chinese theme in mind and was probably actively planning for the series, more than a year in advance of its publication. Goldsmith's claim of 'erudition' might be a light-hearted comment of humorous effect, especially in light of the second half of this sentence; however, 'erudition' might also show both Goldsmith's awareness of the explosion of interest in China and his knowledge about its culture and history.[6] Goldsmith's choice of a Chinese persona might be due to the fact that information about China was more readily available than that of other eastern countries in eighteenth-century Europe. For example, Goldsmith consulted the third edition of Louis Le Comte's *Nouveaux mémoires sur l'état présent de la Chine* (1697), as well as Jean-Baptiste Du Halde's *A Description of the Empire of China* (1738 and 1741).[7] Moreover, in

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[5] Oliver Goldsmith, *The Collected Letters of Oliver Goldsmith*, ed. K. C. Balderston (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1928), pp. 39-40.

[6] Kitson points out that there was a 'remarkable explosion of interest in Chinese things in the decade of the 1750s and beyond [in Britain]'. Kitson, 'Eighteenth-century Adaptations of China', p. 11. While the cult of Chinoiserie started in Europe earlier in the eighteenth century, notable literary works related to China, such as *The Citizen of the World* (1762), *The Orphan of China* (1759), and *Hau Kiou Choaan* (1761), were produced in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

[7] The footnotes in *The Citizen of the World*, ed. Arthur Friedman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), explain which edition of *A Description of the Empire of China* that Goldsmith consulted in various parts of his writing. There are also numerous footnotes in Friedman's edition of the text that show textual parallels found between Goldsmith's collection of Chinese letters and other works, such as Du Halde's *A Description of the Empire of China*.

'A French Influence on Goldsmith's "Citizen of the World"', R. S. Crane and H. J. Smith have carefully studied and compared the texts of the Marquis d'Argens's *Lettres Chinoises* (1740) and *The Citizen of the World*, and identified ten letters from *The Citizen of the World* that borrow extensive materials from *Lettres Chinoises*, as well as a total of twenty-one letters from the former that resemble the writings in the latter.[8] Furthermore, in terms of its letter format, *The Citizen of the World* is modelled on *Lettres Chinoises* as well as Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes* (*Persian Letters*) of 1721. Essentially, previous works on China had provided a significant amount of ready materials for Goldsmith in his portrayal of his protagonist's country of origin.

However, in addition to its consultation of and borrowings from a few major works related to China published earlier in the century, the work's inception of Chinese themes is also Goldsmith's particular choice. In *The Life of Oliver Goldsmith* (1837), James Prior observes that:

> A Chinese was then chosen as offering more novelty of character than a Turk or Persian; and being equally advanced in the scale of civilization, could pass an opinion on all he saw better than the native of a more barbarous country.[9]

Prior's observation indicates that the civilization of China might be a factor for Goldsmith in his decision to make China the nationality of his protagonist; an equally advanced civilization makes it more probable for a British audience to sympathise with the thoughts and experience of the Chinese in *The Citizen of the World*, and thus contribute to the implementation of Goldsmith's playful claim: 'I shall soon make our Chinese talk like an Englishman to show his [erudition].'[10]

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[8] R. S. Crane and H. J. Smith, 'A French Influence on Goldsmith's "Citizen of the World"', *Modern Philology*, 19/1 (Aug., 1921), 83-92. There are 123 letters in *The Citizen of the World.*

[9] Prior, *The Life of Oliver Goldsmith*, Vol. I, p. 360.

In her work on the fiction of the East in England in the seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries, Ros Ballaster identifies four major groups of fictional sources about China, including oriental tales with a 'Chinese' setting, tragic plays about Chinese 'orphans', representations of China as an empire of 'Dulness', and letters written in the voice of the Chinese.[11] The Chinese pseudo-letters, though still fictional, involve a greater extent of inter-cultural exchange and encounter than the other genres, as the Chinese protagonist reports back to his friend at home of his experience in England. *The Citizen of the World*, therefore, belongs to a conventional genre of writings on China in eighteenth-century Britain. The uniqueness of this text rests, however, on its subtle and more extensive scale in the observation of different aspects of British society, as well as the role of Goldsmith's Irishness in a seemingly Sino-British encounter.

James Watt observes that through Lien Chi's encounter with the English, *The Citizen of the World* 'repeatedly foregrounds the objectification of its title character', and that the work 'often seems more interested in familiarizing Lien Chi than in providing any truer description of his Chineseness'. As a result, Watt argues, 'the idea of "the real China" remains little more than a rhetorical counter'.[12] Watt's argument can be evaluated from different perspectives. On the one hand, the idea that readers cannot really know more about the real China is reasonably observed, for Goldsmith's text does not present much information about the social reality of eighteenth-century China. It might be argued that this is a limitation of the work. On the other hand, the text is nonetheless a work about China, in the sense that it reflects the essence of traditional Chinese philosophical thoughts through which an idealised version of Chinese politics and culture is presented.

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[10] Goldsmith, *Collected Letters*, ed. Balderston pp. 39-40.

[11] Ros Ballaster, *Fabulous Orients: Fictions of the East in England 1662-1785* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p. 23.

[12] James Watt, '"The Indigent Philosopher": Oliver Goldsmith', *A Companion to Irish Literature*, ed. J. M. Wright (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), pp. 210-225, at p. 216.

Horace Walpole's pamphlet, *A Letter from Xo Ho, A Chinese Philosopher at London, to His Friend Lien Chi at Peking* (1757), is another work about China written in letter form. The fact that the pamphlet went through five editions in the year of its publication makes it probable that Goldsmith had also consulted this work in his writing of *The Citizen of the World*.[13] The name of the recipient in Walpole's work – Lien Chi – is the same as that of the Chinese protagonist in Goldsmith's work, which can be seen as evidence for Goldsmith's acknowledgement of *A Letter from Xo Ho*.

Walpole attacks the factionalism and corruption of eighteenth-century British politics as Xo Ho describes in detail his observation of the court martial and execution of Admiral John Byng over the loss of Minorca in 1757, at the beginning of the Seven Years' War. For example, Xo Ho describes the corruption and inconsistency in the English judiciary:

> The third Faction who were in the Nature of Judges, would only try Facts and not Persons; and even if they could have punished Facts, they showed they were not unmerciful. I do not understand this Nation.[14]

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[13] Ballaster, *Fabulous Orients*, p. 243.

[14] Horace Walpole, *A Letter from Xo Ho, a Chinese Philosopher at London, to His Friend Lien Chi at Peking* (London: printed for Josiah Graham, 1757), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last

In his letter, Xo Ho repeatedly expresses his incomprehension about the English ways. For example, in the opening of the letter, Xo Ho states that:

> I have told thee [Lien Chi, the recipient of this letter], this People [the English people] are incomprehensible; not only they differ from us; they are unlike the rest of the Western World […] A *Frenchman* has settled Ideas, though built on false Foundations; an *Englishman* has no fixed Ideas: His Prejudices are not of his Country, but against some particular Parts or Maxims of his Country. (p. 1)

As a British national writing in the midst of the Seven Years' War, Walpole at once satirises the faults of the French enemy and criticises a lack of principle in his own countrymen, especially with regard to politics. Moreover, Xo Ho states that he cannot understand the exercise of law and politics in England by claiming that 'I was deceived' four times in the same paragraph, and concluding with 'Reason in China is not Reason in England' (p. 2).

Walpole, who seeks to represent a 'real' China as opposed to the portrayal of China in oriental tales and superficial travel texts, has been nonetheless criticised for his authorial interventions which 'expose rather than dispel ignorance'.[15] In *A Letter from Xo Ho*, Walpole writes about Xo Ho's view of the superior qualities of Chinese culture, which contradicts the self-acclaimed cultural sovereignty of most British people of the period. Walpole here uses China as a 'mirror' for England, not only to underline how the cultural anxieties manifested by the Chinese philosopher are similar to British fears of eastern influence, but also to reveal more straightforwardly the cultural and

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accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/>, p. 3. All subsequent references to this work will appear in-text.

[15] Ballaster, *Fables of the East*, p. 129.

political problems of his own country through the perspective of the Other.

While Walpole's Chinese protagonist makes it clear that he 'do[es] not understand this Nation' and places Confucian rationalism over the irrational practice of English society, Goldsmith's protagonist makes a greater effort to engage with English people and describes various aspects of the country. Ballaster argues that there is a paradoxical representation of China in eighteenth-century English works:

> China could serve as a resource for images of both an extreme rationalism and the playful unconscious bordering on insanity, because it was a manufactured product of the Western imagination, generated, however, not for imperial political ends but rather for domestic narcissism or critique.[16]

Both Walpole's and Goldsmith's imaginative redactions of China emphasise the country's association with rationalism and Confucian ethics, yet the tone in both works can sometimes lead to comic effects.[17] Perhaps it is the juxtaposition of solemnity and lightness in the content and form of these works that at once fascinates a British audience and arguably brings about serious reflection upon their problems at home.

China, Britain, and Ireland: autobiographical reflections in *The Citizen of the World*

In his biographical entry on Oliver Goldsmith, John A. Dussinger adopts the writer's own term in *The Vicar of Wakefield* – of 'philosophical vagabond' – to describe Goldsmith's role as a cultural observer. After receiving his bachelor's degree at Trinity

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[16] Ballaster, *Fabulous Orient*, p. 253.

[17] More textual analysis on this theme will follow in this chapter.

College, Dublin, Goldsmith left Ireland for Scotland and the Netherlands, where he studied medicine for three years; after that, he spent a year undertaking a tour of the continent, as he travelled through Flanders, France, Switzerland, Germany, and Italy.[18] The term 'philosophical vagabond' also applies to Goldsmith's own definition of a cultural ambassador; as he suggests through his fictional protagonist Lien Chi, a real ambassador, who is capable of genuine and effective cultural discovery, should be

> a man of a philosophical turn […] neither swollen with pride, nor hardened by prejudice, neither wedded to one particular system, nor instructed only in one particular science […] his mind should be tinctured with miscellaneous knowledge, and his manners humanized by an intercourse with men.[19]

Lien Chi states that European merchants and missionaries, who have travelled the most to the eastern parts of the world, are not real cultural ambassadors, because they are ignorant of (or unconcerned about) the cultural value of the distant places they visit. Through the collection of pseudo-letters, Goldsmith implies that similarities can often be found amid differences between cultures.

In the preface to this work, Goldsmith describes himself as 'the editor' of the collection of letters (which assumes authenticity for this work) and argues that 'The Chinese and we are pretty much alike' (Preface). Trying to familiarize the Chinese to the British through this work, the author – or the 'editor' as he would rather call himself – criticises the distorted British understanding of the Chinese, which is shaped by the cult of Chinoiserie. The editor observes that with a proper knowledge of China one may find more common ground between these two cultures. Essentially, the gap in British understanding of China can be filled by means of the work of judicious observers who are capable of appreciating knowledge of a country other than their own. Goldsmith sees that in order for any kind of progress to take place, the opposition between the Orient and the Occident would have to be dismantled because it prohibits proper knowledge being achieved. The West's construction of the East through media such as the cult of Chinoiserie and oriental fables obscures what the East actually is.

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[18] John A. Dussinger, 'Goldsmith, Oliver', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://www.oxforddnb.com>.

[19] Oliver Goldsmith, *The Citizen of the World*, in *Collected Works of Oliver Goldsmith* [Vol. II], ed. Arthur Friedman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), p. 421. All subsequent references to this work will be in-text.

Goldsmith also adopts reverse ethnography in this collection of pseudo-letters. In Letter XXX, Lien Chi describes the purpose of his letters to Fum Hoam (recipient of most of his letters): 'in them you will find rather a minute detail of English peculiarities, than a general picture of their manners or disposition' (pp. 126-127). The way Lien Chi explores English culture is clearly supported by Goldsmith's own idea of adequate cultural observation, despite the fictionality of the text. Through the persona of a Chinese philosopher, Goldsmith is able to reinforce his ambition of achieving proper observation, in the sense of unbiased and more balanced examination of societies. Through his protagonist, Goldsmith provides a range of comic description, cultural satire, and moral observation, which engage with social, cultural and religious practices in eighteenth-century England. In a letter entitled 'The Behaviour of the Congregation in St Paul's Church at Prayers' (Letter XLI), Lien Chi describes his first experience at a Christian service in England. Lien Chi points out the 'remissness' of behaviour among almost all of the worshippers he has observed in the service, and shows his disappointment at the want of sincerity in the religious practice:

> I now looked round me as directed, but saw nothing of that fervent devotion […] one of the worshippers appeared to be ogling the company through a glass; another was fervent, not in addresses to Heaven, but to his mistress; a third whispered; a fourth took snuff; and the priest himself, in a drowsy tone, read over the duties of the day. (p. 175)

A stranger to the culture he now experiences, Lien Chi is able to observe things around him more sharply and clearly than English people whose views are limited or constrained by the very culture to which they belong.

Goldsmith's criticism of Lien Chi's British hosts might have been intensified by his own identity as an Irish writer who was unhappy with his own treatment as an Irishman in Britain. In treating Lien Chi as a kind of cultural 'other' outside of his native land, Goldsmith identifies with him in observing a culture other than his own. In the preface, Goldsmith describes his relationship with the Chinese visitor in this way: 'in the intimacy between my author [Lien Chi] and me, he had usually given me a lift of his Eastern sublimity, and I have sometimes given him a return of my colloquial ease (Preface, p. 14).' The problems and misunderstandings faced by Lien Chi in the foreign land reflect Goldsmith's own predicaments as an Irish writer who was striving to make a living in Britain. In his essay, 'On the Advantages to be Derived from Sending a Judicious Traveller into Asia', Goldsmith points out that most eighteenth-century European travellers to Asia are prejudiced and ignorant of the eastern regions they visit, on account of their 'motives of commerce or piety'.[20] The author also claims how it is 'surprising, that in such a variety of adventurers not one single philosopher should be found.'[21] As a result, in *The Citizen of the World*, Goldsmith makes Lien Chi a philosopher from China, as if to demonstrate that the observations made by his Chinese visitor to Britain (and therefore his own observations) carry more wisdom and insight than most British travellers to the East were capable of at the time.

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[20] Oliver Goldsmith, 'On the Advantages to be Derived from Sending a Judicious Traveller into Asia', *Essays, Poems and Plays* (London: W. Baynes & Son, 1824), pp. 85-88, at p. 85. 'I have been

At other points, Goldsmith alludes to his own experience as a wanderer. In his 'Letter from a Traveller', the speaker states that for seven years – which was the same period of time between Goldsmith's departure from Ireland and his writing of *The Citizen of the World* – he had not met 'a single creature who cared a farthing whether [he] was dead or alive', and claims that 'the highest character [he] can ever acquire, is that of [...] a philosophic vagabond.'[22] Moreover, the speaker also demonstrates his sense of seclusion and loss by stating that '[he] feel[s] the solitude of a hermit, but not his ease.'[23] Goldsmith's uneasiness about his identity reflects Anglo-Irish tension in the eighteenth century. As a British colony, Catholic Ireland was ruled by Protestant England, and alongside the repressive relations between colonizer and colonized, prospects in Ireland were limited.[24] Many Irish people were compelled to emigrate to London; Goldsmith was one of them. However, despite the appearance of politeness attributed to eighteenth-century England, the Irish people experienced prejudice. This

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frequently amazed at the ignorance of almost all the European travellers who have penetrated any considerable way eastward into Asia. They have been influenced either by motives of commerce or piety; and their accounts are such as might reasonably be expected from men of very narrow or very prejudiced education, – the dictates of superstition, or the results of ignorance.'

[21] Ibid.

[22] Goldsmith, 'Letter from a Traveller', *Collected Works* (Volume I), ed. Friedman (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), p. 370.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Despite political power being the preserve of the Protestant Ascendancy, most Christians in Ireland were Catholic.

was reflected in both popular culture and through Goldsmith's own account. Norma Clarke points out that

> On stage and in popular culture generally the Irish were for laughing at; they could be expected to get things wrong; their inferiority to the English was axiomatic.[25]

Perhaps feelings of inferiority made some Irish authors more acute social observers in England; they could write to 'entertain' and criticise at the same time. In a letter to his brother-in-law Dan Hodson, Goldsmith tells him that England was

> a Co[untry] where my being born an Irishman was sufficient to keep me [unem]ploy'd. Manny[sic] in such circumstances would have had recou[rse to] the friar's cord, or the suicide's halter. But with all my fol[lies I] had principle to resist the one, and resolution to com[bat the] other.[26]

This letter was written in 1757, not long after Goldsmith's arrival in England and his introduction to Grub Street in London. Goldsmith's anxiety and sense of repression as a foreigner is demonstrated through his almost acute awareness of his national identity and the difficulties it caused him (which might have led another to commit suicide, for example).

Despite such consciousness of his own identity, Goldsmith's works have been viewed by some critics as making relatively few references to his native land. Seamus Deane comments that 'of all the Irish writers of the eighteenth century […] [Goldsmith was] perhaps the least affected by any specifically national sentiment.'[27]

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[25] Norma Clarke, *Brothers of the Quill: Oliver Goldsmith in Grub Street* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), p. 33.

[26] Goldsmith to Dan Hodson, 1757, *Collected Letters*, ed. Balderston, p. 27.

[27] Seamus Deane, 'Oliver Goldsmith: Miscellaneous Writings 1759-74', *The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing* (Vol. I), ed. S. Deane (Derry: Field Day, 1991), pp. 658-81, at p. 660.

Given the self-consciousness of his national identity in his letters, as well as the subtle exploration of various ills within English society in *The Citizen of the World*, Goldsmith was obviously affected by 'specifically national sentiment'. However, just as James Watt suggests, such national sentiment was seldom articulated outright:

> Goldsmith regarded himself as an exile from Ireland and often alluded to the Irish midlands where he grew up […] Nonetheless, he made *little direct reference* to his native land, and apart from in his now ignored histories seems largely to have avoided any topics of ongoing political controversy.[28]

It is perhaps such shunning of controversial politics that not only protected Goldsmith's writing career at a precarious time, but also provided him with new ways of expressing his Irishness. One such expression could be the writer's adoption of the theme of travel and the frequent appearance of travellers in his works. Apart from the Chinese traveller – Lien Chi – in *The Citizen of the World*, Goldsmith adopts the image of a foreign traveller in a number of his other writings. Indeed, Watt describes Lien Chi as 'one of countless "travellers" in Goldsmith's work'.[29] For instance, in his pseudo-oriental work, 'Letters from an Armenian in Ireland, to his Friends at Trebisonde' (1757), Goldsmith writes about Ireland from the perspective of a foreign traveller.[30] In his dedication to *The Traveller; or, a Prospect of Society* (1765), his much-admired poem, Goldsmith notes that 'I have endeavoured to shew, that there may be equal happiness in other states, though differently governed from our own', presenting his idea of travelling as a kind of philosophic vocation. That idea is similarly expressed in *The Citizen of the World*.[31] 'Description of the Manners and Customs of the Native Irish' (1759) is written, again, in the form of a letter, this time by 'an English Gentleman' after his visit to Ireland.[32]

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[28] Watt, '"The Indigent Philosopher": Oliver Goldsmith', p. 210. Italics added.
[29] Ibid., p. 214.
[30] Goldsmith, 'Letters from an Armenian in Ireland, to his Friends at Trebisonde', *Collected Works* (Volume I), ed. Friedman, pp. 90-93.

Goldsmith was very conscious of his national identity and understood what it meant for him as a writer from Ireland. Clarke summarises Goldsmith's mode of writing by claiming that:

> He [Goldsmith] was a writer of strong autobiographical impulse whose mode was resolutely impersonal. He never wrote a memoir, but his writings are full of himself.[33]

As an Irishman in London, Goldsmith found means for emotional outlets that did not endanger his career as a writer. It was decades after his death when James Prior published a scholarly researched biography of Goldsmith in 1837.[34] Even as late as 1928, when editing Goldsmith's surviving letters (and fragments of letters), Katharine Balderston still emphasised the 'scanty biographical data' and 'obscure history' of Goldsmith's life.[35] Perhaps it was indeed the small amount of biographical detail available to the public that enabled both the writer himself and the readers to concentrate on the text, and thus for us to decipher messages both nationally and personally charged.

In *The Citizen of the World*, China acts as a medium for the tension between Ireland and England. Joseph Lennon argues that Goldsmith might have conceived the idea of a Chinese protagonist because it enabled him to '"write back" to England while avoiding the uncomfortable persona of the barbarous Irishman'.[36] Lennon's idea sets Goldsmith's intention in the larger context of colonialism, which includes issues such as imperialism, power and repression. The idea of the nation, at times, provokes sarcasm from Goldsmith. For example, in Letter CXIX, Lien Chi gives an account of his encounter with a disabled British soldier. This soldier, whose name is 'Jack' (possibly alluding to the Union Jack of England), has lived miserably in his country and faced various kinds of social injustice due to his poverty. Nonetheless, he passionately speaks of his love for England, that he will 'for ever love liberty and Old England. Liberty, property, and Old England, for ever' (pp. 463, 465). While the use of 'Old England' appears to emphasise the greatness of the nation's history, the repetition of 'liberty' ironically reflects how difficult and unfree the lives of poor people such as the disabled soldier's are in contemporary England. Watt observes that even as Goldsmith uses Lien Chi to satirise 'metropolitan false consciousness', he additionally 'registers the deep hold of an instinctive and unreflecting patriotism.'[37] Such a subtle interplay between provincialism and cosmopolitanism is central to the idea of inclusion within diversity in *The Citizen of the World*.

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[31] Goldsmith, *The Traveller; or, a Prospect of Society*, *The Miscellaneous Works of Oliver Goldsmith* (Volume IV), ed. James Prior (London: John Murray, 1837), p. 11.

[32] Goldsmith, 'Description of the Manners and Customs of the Native Irish', *Collected Works* (Volume III), ed. Friedman, p. 26.

[33] Clarke, *Brothers of the Quill*, p. 7.

[34] Prior, *The Life of Oliver Goldsmith*.

[35] Balderston, Preface, *The Collected Letters of Oliver Goldsmith*, p. v.

Kitson argues that China makes an 'ambivalent contribution to the British domestic cultural sphere'; moreover, Kitson lists Ireland's mediation of Chinese subjects to Georgian Britain as one such contribution.[38] While China functions as a medium between England and Ireland, Ireland is also capable of mediating Chinese culture to Britain. As an acute cultural observer, Lien Chi can be seen as Goldsmith's alter ego in the text. Clarke describes Goldsmith's use of Chinese personae as 'a response to the ambiguities of his own and the Irish situation'.[39] As a result, Goldsmith's authorial intention is both a personal response to provincial limitation and a reflection of national tension.

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[36] Joseph Lennon, *Irish Orientalism: A Literary and Intellectual History* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2004), p. 130.

[37] Watt, '"The Indigent Philosopher": Oliver Goldsmith', p. 217.

[38] Peter Kitson, 'Introduction: China and the British Romantic Imagination', *European Romantic Review*, 27/1 (2016), 3-7, at p. 4.

As a writer, Goldsmith was versatile. Samuel Johnson observed admirably that Goldsmith 'touched every kind of writing, and touched none that he did not adorn.'[40] As one of the first generation of professional writers who turned to readers and booksellers – instead of aristocratic patrons – for financial support, Goldsmith's works might be seen as relating more closely to a wide reading public and to contemporary questions. This is at once his freedom and his limitation: he was able to write about his personal concerns but could only do so under disguise. Among the rest of his major works, *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766) and *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773) remain popular to the present day.[41] Johnson claimed that Goldsmith's writing ranked 'in the first class', and described the author as 'a man who, whatever he wrote, did it better than any other man could do'.[42] Commenting on Goldsmith's legacy, John Montague declares that Goldsmith produced the best work in poetry, drama and the essay in England between 1759 and 1774.[43] In his relatively short writing career from his late twenties to his death at forty-five, Goldsmith experimented with various kinds of writing. While he has been criticised by some major writers from the eighteenth century and beyond as having forgotten about his native land, he has also been regarded (sometimes by his former critics) as an Irishman who responded to English life through his works.[44] Clarke observes that Goldsmith's career is a journey 'from Irish vagabond to English man of letters, a progress he at once displayed and disguised.'[45] Perhaps the two ends of this journey are not clear-cut after all, and are precisely the cause of the subtlety, ambiguity and fascination found in the author and his writing.

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[39] Clarke, *Brothers of the Quill*, p. 22.

[40] Translation of Johnson's epitaph (in Latin) engraved on Goldsmith's monument in Westminster Abbey. Cited in Clarke, *Brothers of the Quill*, p. 3.

[41] The former has not been out of print, and the latter continues to be staged.

[42] James Boswell, *Life of Johnson*, ed. R. W. Chapman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 537, p. 918.

[43] John Montague, 'Tragic Picaresque: Oliver Goldsmith, the Biographical Aspect', *Studies: An Irish*

Reflections of China and Britain: textual analysis of *The Citizen of the World*

Goldsmith made careful revision after the serial publication of his Chinese letters, in preparation for the collected edition that finally appeared in two volumes on 1st May 1762.[46] Following the publication of the last letter in the *Public Ledger*, Goldsmith writes in a note to inform the reader of the improvement in the forthcoming collected edition:

> The numerous Errors of the Press are corrected, and the Errors of the Writer, still, perhaps, more numerous, are retrenched. Some new Letters are added, and others, which were remarkable only for being dull, are wholly omitted.[47]

Commenting on the printing record of the first collected edition of *The Citizen of the*

Quarterly Review, 49/193 (1960), 45-53, at p. 49.

[44] Alongside major eighteenth-century writers such as Sheridan, Swift and Burke, James Joyce criticised Goldsmith for his evasion of Ireland in his writing; however, when Joyce read *The Vicar of Wakefield* at a later time, he immediately saw the text as a critique of the power of England over Ireland. This example is taken from Clarke, *Brothers of the Quill*, p. 23.

[45] Clarke, *Brothers of the Quill*, p. 22.

[46] Friedman, 'Introduction' to *The Citizen of the World*, pp. x-xii.

[47] Footnote to the concluding line of the text, *The Citizen of the World*, p. 476.

World, Friedman notes that Goldsmith's additions and corrections consist of 'a tenth of the whole cost of printing'.[48] One can infer from this piece of information that Goldsmith's revision of the text had been extensive, which reflects the author's painstaking efforts and wish for the improvement of the letters. In 1763, *The Citizen of the World* was translated into French and German. The text did not draw immediate popularity in Britain, but enjoyed greater attention in the years following Goldsmith's death, especially between 1774 and 1800, when it went through eleven editions.[49]

By using reverse ethnography in the collection of pseudo-letters, Goldsmith is able to show that the curiosity of the Chinese philosopher towards British culture is nothing different from how the majority of British people perceive China as a distant and fascinating place. At his first arrival in England, Lien Chi expresses his wonder in a light sarcastic manner at the way 'the fine gentleman' and 'the fine lady' in England dress themselves (p. 23). For example, Lien Chi represents the affected way the fine English gentlemen dress by describing their dress codes as either 'affect[ing] the gravity of the lion' or 'resembl[ing] the pert vivacity of smaller animals' (p. 23-24).

This kind of animalization is later reversed when Lien Chi, in Letter XIV, shows that he is treated as almost a different kind of creature by an old upper-class English lady. Lien Chi mocks the ignorance and preconceptions about his native culture through recounting this interview. Because of his identity as Chinese, Lien Chi is invited by the old English lady of distinction to her house. The lady's fascination with the Chinese stranger is driven by her vast obsession with Chinese porcelain, furniture and architecture. Such fascination amusingly culminates in her asking a servant to bring a plate of beef cut into small pieces, and desiring to see Lien Chi eat them with a pair of chopsticks. In addition, she describes the depth of her grief whenever her Chinese furniture or decorations become accidentally damaged. The cultural gap is shown when the lady claims that her vast collection of Chinese jars are 'of no use in the world' (p. 64). However, Lien Chi contradicts her by claiming that 'nothing is truly elegant but what unites use with beauty (p. 64).' He then shows her that the jars are used in China for filling with an infusion of tea. This incident satirises the pretension of the fashionable English circle who were obsessed with Chinese imports without knowing the cultural meanings they carried. When seeing that it is impossible to change the lady's view of her collection of Chinese items as bare symbols of a mysterious and distant region – culturally unidentifiable with her own nation – Lien Chi notes in the letter that he chooses to 'act the disciple [rather] than the instructor' (p. 65). Perhaps such a hierarchical relation also symbolizes the cultural relations between the East and the West in the eighteenth century, in which the West assumes the role of an instructor of knowledge about the East and the East becomes a passive object within the West's imaginative construction. The visit is cut off by Lien Chi's abrupt departure, just as the lady's servant advances towards him with a plate full of chopped beef.

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[48] Friedman, p. xi.

[49] Only one English edition of *The Citizen of the World* was published during Goldsmith's lifetime. In 1766, Goldsmith's publisher Newbery noted that a French translation of *The Citizen of the World* had gone through 'four impressions'. Further London editions of this work were dated 1776, 1782, 1785, 1790, 1792, 1793-4, 1794, 1796, 1799, and 1800. Friedman, p. xiv.

In Letter XXXIII, Lien Chi vividly describes how he is received and treated by his hosts and fellow guests over a dinner party. The letter opens with Lien Chi's angered exclamation as he writes to his friend Fum Hoam in China: 'I AM disgusted, O Fum Hoam, even to sickness disgusted (p. 142).' Before moving on to recount his experience at a dinner party the previous evening, Lien Chi briefly explains the cause of his disgust:

> Where-ever I come, I raise either diffidence or astonishment; some fancy me no Chinese, because I am formed more like a man than a monster; and others wonder to find one born five thousand miles from England, endued with common sense. (p. 142)

The sense of otherness felt by Lien Chi runs through his letters despite his claim to be cosmopolitan, and often Lien Chi would surprise the local people (the British) when they find out that in reality he is not much different from them. Lien Chi recalls the reception he is given at his host's party: 'she [a lady of distinction] had collected all her knowledge of eastern manners from fictions every day propagated [in Britain] (p. 142).' As a result of the hostess' fictionally informed vision of eastern manners, Lien Chi is 'assigned [his] place on a cushion on the floor' while all other guests sit in chairs (p. 143). This is despite his explanation that in China people also use chairs. Moreover, the footman is ordered to 'pin a napkin under [Lien Chi's] chin' against his protest that it is 'no way Chinese', and the hostess seems to wonder why he 'neglected bringing opium and a tobacco box' (p. 143).

Despite all these misconstrued notions about Chinese table manners, Lien Chi finds himself unable to lose his temper, as he claims that these British people 'err only from an excess of politeness' (p. 143). Similar incidents occur as the dinner proceeds. Guests watch with wonder at their Chinese visitor when he chooses to eat beef instead of 'Bear's claws' or 'Birds nest'; a gentleman who claims to be knowledgeable about

Chinese customs and culture delivers a speech about China that is filled with mistakes (p. 143).

This Englishman – who claims to be an author – speaks presumptuously about his 'extensive' knowledge about China, including its geography, people, and literature, which only proves to be a collection of false and unsupported beliefs. This English author tells the party that he has written many eastern tales himself, and that such work should always be 'sonorous, lofty, musical and *unmeaning*' (p. 145, italics added). This view of oriental tales resonates with the old English lady's view of Chinese jars – which are for her 'of no use in the world' (Letter XIV). The English author also claims that 'every advance made towards sense, is only a deviation from sound' for the 'true eastern taste' (p. 145). Lien Chi shows his own amusement at this remark, for '[he] could not avoid smiling to hear a native of England attempt to instruct [him] in the true eastern idiom (p. 145).'

It is also at this point that Lien Chi turns from a silent observer into an active speaker, as he chooses to offer an insight into the essence of Chinese writing to the guests at the table. He asks the English author whether he has been to any of the eastern countries or is acquainted with their language, and upon receiving the negative answer, proceeds to introduce Chinese writing to the group. He takes pains to explain the manner of Chinese writing, and shows that sense and logic are everywhere the same.

Lien Chi tells the English author that it is impossible to judge the eastern style without knowledge of eastern writing. He observes that the imitation of eastern writing by western authors does not – 'either in sentiment or diction' – resemble the manner of actual eastern literature (p. 145). Chinese writing is characterised by 'a cool phlegmatic method', and Chinese writers are 'ever more assiduous to instruct than to please, address rather the judgment than the fancy' (pp. 145-6). After this, Lien Chi remarks that the Chinese people generally acquire superior knowledge and more extensive experience than people from other parts of Asia, and that many of them are instructed 'not only in their own national learning, but are perfectly well acquainted with the languages and learning of the west' (p. 146). Lien Chi describes himself as one of the Chinese travellers who have 'travelled so many thousand miles, who have conversed familiarly for several years with the English factors established at Canton, and the missionaries sent us from every part of Europe' (p. 147).[50] He believes that there is no actual barrier between people from different countries; the distinction between people lies in learning and experience. The last quotation also covers important historical details about China, alluding to both the Canton system between 1757 and 1842, and to the long history of Jesuit missionaries in China (beginning in the 16th century).[51] As a result, Lien Chi shows the discrepancies between British imaginative constructions of China and concrete knowledge of Chinese culture. However, our Chinese philosopher's earnest discourse has not drawn any attention from his fellow guests: '[he] perceived the company no way attentive to what [he] attempted, with so much earnestness, to enforce (p. 147).' The English gentleman, to whose talk Lien Chi is responding, is found '[falling] fast asleep' (p. 147). The conclusion of this letter shows how Lien Chi takes an early leave from his host and the other guests, who do not appear to care about his departure: 'it was found that I aimed at appearing rather a reasonable creature, than an outlandish ideot [sic] (p. 147).'

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[50] Goldsmith appears to have borrowed this quotation from d'Argens's *Lettres Chinoises*. *The Citizen of the World*, footnote 2, p. 147.

[51] The Canton system refers to the method for Chinese government to control China's trade with the West by limiting all trade in the southern port of Canton. Following the Treaty of Nanking between China and Britain which ended the First Opium War (1839-42), China was obliged to open more ports to foreign trade.

Such a conclusion to Lien Chi's experience at the dinner party reflects how deeply ingrained visions of China are for the British hostess and guests. But it also shows that these people are reluctant, or at least indifferent, to acquire more realistic knowledge about Chinese culture and customs. China seems to function as an ambivalent presence in the British cultural sphere of the eighteenth century: the British at once relied on this oriental land and the fantastical spectacles of their own imagination it seemed to generate, and were reluctant to believe that the Chinese other might not turn out to be so different, after all.[52]

Lien Chi satirises the pretension of the British fashionable circle who are obsessed with Chinoiserie artefacts without knowing the cultural meanings they carry. As a visitor from China, Lien Chi is not received by his hostess as a normal individual who is capable of thinking and feeling, but almost as a human artefact from the East that needs to be different and observed on those terms. For example, when Lien Chi tells his hostess that 'pagods of all kinds are [his] aversion', the lady claims that 'a Chinese, a traveller, and want taste! It surprises me (p. 64).'

By depicting such difficulties of understanding, Goldsmith shows that this failure derives from the want of open-mindedness, and that despite differences in culture, the mentality towards perceived outsiders remains similar across cultures. Lien Chi wisely summarizes the situation:

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[52] Eighteenth-century oriental fables and tales written by British writers largely describe eastern regions (sometimes fictional) as fanciful places.

> The ridicule lay not in them, but in me; that I falsely condemned others for absurdity, because they happened to differ from a standard so originally founded in prejudice or partiality. (p. 22)

By successfully prevailing upon the Man in Black – an Englishman with whom he becomes best friends during his visit in London – to become his companion as he leaves England and carries on 'examining the manners of different countries', Lien Chi ends up treating his English friend not only as a travel partner, but also as – like himself – a true citizen of the world (p. 476).

In the conclusion of *The Citizen of the World*, Lien Chi depicts himself as a world citizen by observing that

> the world being but one city to me, I dont [sic] much care in which of the streets, I happen to reside, I shall therefore spend the remainder of life in examining the manners of different countries […] *They must often change says Confucius, who would be constant in happiness or wisdom*. (p. 476)

It is worth noticing that Goldsmith, by quoting from *The Analects of Confucius* – a classic collection of works recording the teachings of the Chinese sage Confucius – highlights the idea of world citizen and global culture.[53] Goldsmith thus concludes *The Citizen of the World* by reinforcing the statement he makes in the preface of this work – 'The Chinese and we are pretty much alike'.

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[53] It is very possible that Goldsmith read about Confucius in Du Halde's *A Description of the Empire of China*, since *The Analects of Confucius* (*Lunyu*) was first directly translated into English in 1809, thus after the time of Goldsmith's writing.

Despite Lien Chi's acute observation of English society in this work, *The Citizen of the World* also involves essential materials about Chinese culture and classics. The representation of China in Goldsmith's collection of letters is reflected both directly, such as through inclusion of key historical incidents as in Letter XXXIII, and indirectly, through allusions to Chinese philosophical ideas. For instance, in Letter XX, Lien Chi borrows from Confucius to observe that 'it is the duty of the learned to unite society more closely, and to persuade men to become citizens of the world (p. 86).' The ideas of uniting society and the world citizen allude to the core value of Confucianism. In the 'Great Learning' of the *Book of Rites*, a Chinese classic text composed by a disciple of Confucius to reflect his teachings, the writer suggests that one needs to first learn and better oneself in order to manage one's family well, and after this, one can govern the state, and eventually promote virtue in the world.[54]

Moreover, the concept of the Great Unity, which is central in the teachings of Confucius, is also illuminated in *The Citizen of the World*. The Great Unity envisions an idealised society in which people are able to steadily perform their own roles, trust one another and unite as a great family. In Letter XLII, Lien Chi speaks of China as

> an antient [sic] extended empire, established by laws which nature and reason seem to have dictated. The duty of children to their parents, a duty which nature implants in every breast, forms the strength of that government which has subsisted for time immemorial […] By this the whole state may be said to resemble one family, of which the

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[54] *The Book of Rites*, also known as *Liji*, is one of the Five Classics of the traditional Confucian canon. The book describes the practice of rites in society, such as rules of personal conduct and principles of administration.

> Emperor is the protector, father, and friend.[55] (p. 177)

This passage resonates with the ideal performance of social and familial responsibilities expressed in *The Analects of Confucius*. Confucius describes good government as a state 'when the ruler is the ruler, and the subject is the subject; when the father is father, and the son is son'.[56] This description suggests that rulers, subjects, fathers, and sons should observe their respective rites in order for a society to achieve good government.

Commenting on the message behind 'the duty of the learned', Watt suggests that Lien Chi 'indeed presents such "philosophical" travel as a vocation to be embraced'.[57] This observation not only connects to Goldsmith's self-claimed identity as a 'philosophical vagabond', but also links to Lien Chi's description of a cultural ambassador as 'a man of a philosophical turn' (p. 421), both of which have been previously discussed in this chapter.

The Citizen of the World concludes with the following line: '*They must often change says Confucius, who would be constant in happiness or wisdom*'. The quote from Confucius is taken from the third maxim of Confucius in Le Comte's *Nouveaux mémoires sur l'état présent de la Chine* (i.339).[58] A similar expression may be found in the original Chinese source, *The Analects of Confucius*, where Confucius says: 'The wise are *active* whilst the benevolent are still' (6:23). Lien Chi's companionship with his English friend, alongside the saying of Confucius, make the text end on a note of unity and wisdom – foundational values in traditional Chinese philosophies. The ending essentially demonstrates aspiration for shared ideals across diverse cultures.

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[55] Goldsmith might have referred to Du Halde's work on China in his composition of this passage: 'The Political Government of *China* entirely turns on the reciprocal Duty of Parents and Children. The Emperor is called the father of the Empire; the Vice-Roy is the Father of the Province under his Command; as the *Mandarin* is of the City which he governs. This single Principle is the Foundation of that great Respect and ready Obedience which the *Chinese* pay to the Officers who assist the Emperor to sustain the Weight of Government' (Du Halde, *A Description of the Empire of China*, Vol. I, p. 248).

[56] *The Analects of Confucius*, ed. Chichung Huang (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 12:11. All subsequent references will appear in-text.

[57] Watt, p. 214.

[58] 'Un homme doit souvent changer, s'il veut estre constant dans la sagesse'. Louis Le Comte, *Nouveaux mémoires sur l'état présent de la Chine* (Paris: Anisson, 1696), Internet Archive, last accessed 30 September 2018, <https://archive.org>.

The title of *The Citizen of the World* implies the cosmopolitan quality of its Chinese protagonist – the wanderer Lien Chi – and summarizes Goldsmith's aspiration for universal brotherhood and universal charity. The epistolary fiction surrounding the stories of Lien Chi and his English friends, as well as the story of the love of Hingpo (Lien Chi's son) and Zelis (an English lady, niece of the Man in Black), seeks to demonstrate that the perceived barrier between the West and the East, or the 'Self' and the 'Other', is not clear-cut in reality, and that the highest ideals of the duty of man to man requires such division to be reconciled. In the editor's preface to this work, Goldsmith explains that, when the Chinese philosopher (Lien Chi) first arrives in England, he is received by the local people with astonishment and confusion, as he 'talk[s] and reason[s] just as [they] do' (Preface, p. 13). The editor then suggests that 'the distinctions among mankind' should not be defined by geographical locations but by virtue and knowledge:

> Savages of the most opposite climates, have all but one character of improvidence and rapacity; and tutored nations, however separate, make use of the very same methods to procure refined enjoyment. (Preface, p. 14)

However, Goldsmith also self-mockingly shows that the ideal state of universal understanding is yet distant from the reality of his age, through an interesting analogy he claims to have dreamt of. The dream is set on the frozen Thames, the venue for a literary fashion fair where authors carry their works to participate. The editor stays at the side of the River and observes that almost all the authors who have carried their works to the fair (located in the centre of the frozen river) have returned to the river bank safely and happily. He therefore decides to take the same adventure himself. As he carries his small collection of works about 'Chinese morality' in a wheel-barrow and walks on the ice towards the fair, the ice cracks and all the works fall into the bottom of the river. Goldsmith's dream satirizes the British cult of chinoiserie, for they make themselves obsessed with taste for things Chinese without wishing to improve their understanding of this new culture. The dream also reflects his self-acknowledgement that his work might not receive a good reception within the mainstream of British readers.

The conclusion of this work reinforces Goldsmith's ideal of cultural harmony between Britain and China, as he makes Hingpo marry Zelis after the couple experience a series of severe trials. The story closes on a point of hopeful anticipation, the final union between the young Chinese man and the English lady symbolizing the future improvement of understanding between Britain and China despite present difficulties.

Goldsmith's use of reverse ethnography in this letter is unique in that it has the effect of confronting the western reader with the absurdity of their unfounded and whimsical imagination of the East from the perspective of the Other. Although Goldsmith only embedded his argument through fiction, he made a serious effort to study Chinese culture and tried to detach his works from commonplace writings that represent the East as mysterious and fanciful.

Notwithstanding their potential to demonstrate sophisticated and useful ideas, oriental fables and tales were understood at least by some in eighteenth-century Britain as only a light form of entertainment. In Letter XXIX ('A description of a club of authors'), Lien Chi speaks of a Mr. Tibs in a writing club in London, and recounts how Tibs is regarded as an author with 'a very *useful hand*' as he writes 'receipts for the bite of a mad dog, and throws off an eastern tale to perfection' (p. 126). It is likely that the fictional editor of the letters (Goldsmith) is here expressing a kind of general sarcasm towards oriental stories as inferior in both his literary culture and according to his own literary ambitions.

Like a number of later Romantic-period writers who wrote about China, such as Robert Southey, Charles Lamb and Leigh Hunt, there is a tendency in Goldsmith's work to revert to Chinoiserie stereotypes. In the letter entitled 'Happiness Lost, by Seeking after Refinement. The Chinese Philosopher's Disgraces' (Letter VI), Goldsmith presents a despot through the image of the Chinese emperor who, offended by Lien Chi's leaving China, has seized his wife and daughter and appropriated them to his use. The image of the despot is one of the central motifs in eighteenth-century oriental literature. For example, the collection of widely disseminated oriental tales – *The Arabian Nights Entertainments* – represents in the character of the Persian King Shahryār a merciless ruler who marries a wife each night only to execute them the next morning (until he meets Scheherazade, the storyteller of the tales).[59] By expressing a critique of despotism through various kinds of oppression and confinement in oriental cultures, these works often seek to demonstrate a contrast between oriental authoritarianism and a perceived occidental liberty. The extent of oriental despotism is sometimes exaggerated in order to typify such a contrast.

In James Gillray's satirical etching, *The Reception of the Diplomatique and His Suite at the Court of Pekin* (1792), the Chinese Qianlong emperor is portrayed as a despot who is indolent, proud and unsympathetic.[60] Historical sources show that this fictional representation of the emperor is only partly true, however. Gillray in his work expresses his (and many Britons') anger at the Chinese imperial ceremony of prostration ('kowtowing'), and at the demand made by the Chinese court that foreign visitors should carry out the full ceremony of kowtowing in front of the emperor. Historically, the two Chinese emperors, who were successively on the throne during the period of the Macartney and Amherst embassies (British embassies to China led respectively by George Macartney and William Amherst, in 1792-94 and 1816), were willing to make compromises with the British ambassadors on adjusting the manner of the ceremony, such as allowing the ambassadors to kneel upon one knee only.[61] Kitson observes that 'Gillary's satire of the British embassy presents no new meaningful knowledge about

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[59] Robert Mack (ed.), *Arabian Nights Entertainments* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995).

[60] See the Appendices of this thesis for a copy of this painting. James Gillray, *The Reception of the Diplomatique and His Suite at the Court of Pekin* (1792), National Portrait Gallery: NPG D12463.

[61] J. Cranmer-Byng (ed.), *An Embassy to China, Being the Journal Kept by Lord Macartney During His Embassy* (London: Longmans, 1962), p. 119. 'Soon after the Legate arrived, and declared that it was finally determined to adopt the English ceremony, only that, as it was not the custom in China to kiss the Emperor's hand, he proposed I should kneel upon both knees instead of it. I told him I had already given my answer, which was to kneel upon one knee only on those occasions when it was usual for the Chinese to prostrate themselves. "Well then", said they, "the ceremony of kissing the Emperor's hand must be omitted." [...] And thus ended this curious negotiation.'

China but rather propagates an established oriental stereotyping far removed from [...] aspirations to a new form of ethnographical precision'.[62] Gillary's representation of the Qianlong emperor as a stereotypical oriental despot heavily generalizes the emperor's rule: the satire chooses to focus just on the emperor's authoritarian qualities and leave out all the other dimensions. Despite certain authoritarian policies imposed by the emperor, Qianlong's reign as a whole contributed hugely to the military, cultural and political development of Qing China.

Despite concluding *The Citizen of the World* with the marriage of Hingpo and Zelis, thus closing the story on a point of hopeful anticipation of the cultural harmony between China and Britain, Goldsmith, at times, also expresses uncertainty about his own ideal of the 'world citizen'. For example, the Man in Black's name is never formally revealed in this story despite him being the best English friend of Lien Chi. In this respect, the Man In Black does not seem to be treated as an individual, but as a symbol, or representation, of a desired British attitude towards the Chinese. The choice of name in itself signals a lack of real balance and understanding between the two cultures, as this character is not treated as an independent being, but generalized as a kind of cultural association. This example also demonstrates the fact that China was yet for most British people in the eighteenth century a distant culture. Although Goldsmith might be trying to make the argument that there is such a thing as a universal code of values, he might himself have encountered doubts about that, or felt the necessity to explore this topic further, in the process of making that claim. In this way, the author is just like the fictional editor personified in the preface to this work, who hesitates upon the riverbank and wonders whether he should walk on the frozen river to the literature fair with his works about 'Chinese morality' (Preface, p. 15).

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[62] Kitson, *Forging Romantic China*, p. 158.

Inter-cultural encounter: Chinese visitors in eighteenth-century Britain

European Jesuit missionaries first travelled to China in the late sixteenth century, and started producing written records about the country's culture and customs, many of which were later collected by Du Halde in his work, *A Description of the Empire of China* (1738).[63] However, Chinese visitors to Britain in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-centuries were few. The census recorded that there were seventy-eight Chinese people in Britain in 1851, most of whom were working people and sailors involved in the Chinese tea trade.[64] In an article on Chinese visitors to Britain in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, Peter Kitson points out that most Chinese-born residents living in Britain at that time were 'virtually silent travellers', and that the first known substantial account of Britain from a Chinese perspective was that of Guo Songtao, the first Chinese ambassador to Britain between 1877 and 1879.[65] The contrast between 'productive' European visitors to China and 'silent' Chinese visitors to Britain in the eighteenth century shows a lack of exchange in viewpoints. As a result, the Chinese were almost always presented on the side of the observed in historical and literary accounts of Sino-British cultural encounter of the period, while the British took the position of the observer.

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[63] In 1806, Robert Morrison became the first British Protestant missionary to China.

[64] Peter Kitson, '"The Kindness of my Friends in England": Chinese Visitors to Britain in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries and Discourses of Friendship and Estrangement', in *European Romantic Review*, 27/1 (2016), 55-70, at p. 57.

[65] Ibid.

Kitson's article focuses on a small number of Chinese elite visitors to London in the latter half of the eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century. Much information about these Chinese travellers is drawn from sources produced or published in eighteenth-century Britain, such as the *Gentleman's Magazine* and portraits of some of these Chinese figures. These Chinese travellers, although well educated, did not leave traceable written records about their experience in Britain. This differs from Goldsmith's fictional Chinese visitor, who is given a voice of his own.

The small numbers of elite Chinese visitors to London in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were all received favourably by the city's cultured society. Some of these visitors had brought their intellectual knowledge of China to Britain, which proved to be much in demand; others had amazed the local people with their creative skills in art. Kitson observes that '[these Chinese visitors] were – for the most part – welcomed and even feted by late eighteenth-century polite society according to the rituals of rational civility and cosmopolitan openness'.[66] Kitson's observation is supported by a number of written records about some of these travellers. For example, the original text attached to an engraving of Loum Kiqua, a Chinese merchant and musician from Canton, reveals that:

> [Loum Kiqua] came over to England in 1756, where he met with different usage, having had the honour of being seen by his Majesty and the rest of the Royal-Family; most of the Nobility, &c, by whom he was much caress'd.[67]

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[66] Kitson, 'Introduction: China and the British Romantic Imagination', 6.

[67] Thomas Burford's engraving of 'Loum Kiqua', after Dominic Serres's painting ('Encounter'), April 1757.

Kiqua was not the only Chinese visitor of the period to have met the British monarchy. Chitqua (c. 1728-1796), the first known Chinese artist to visit Britain, met George III, and in the previous century, Shen Fu-Tsung, a Chinese intellectual who might be the earliest visitor to have travelled from China to Britain, met James II. King James also commissioned to have Shen's portrait painted in 1688 before his departure.[68]

The closest counterpart in China of the British monarchy's reception of foreign visitors has to be the first British embassy to China led by Viscount Macartney of 1792-94, as noted earlier in this chapter. The well-known controversy of the 'kowtow' during the Macartney's embassy seemed to represent the Chinese emperor in the light of a proud and distant ruler, in contrast to the British monarchy who 'caress'd' their Chinese visitors.[69] The contrast is perhaps further sharpened when we think of the next British embassy to China in 1816 (the Amherst Embassy), in which Lord Amherst and his delegation were expelled from the court without an audience with the emperor, as soon as they arrived in Beijing after six months' journey from Britain.[70] Despite the embassy's initial unpleasant encounter at the Chinese court, Macartney described his diplomatic mission as a moderate triumph, which promoted a positive relationship between the British and Chinese officials. In his journal of the embassy, Marcartney observes how

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[68] Kitson, 'Chinese Visitors to Britain', 59 and 57.

[69] Negotiations were made on the question of 'kowtow' between the embassy and the Chinese Qing court, and eventually, the Chinese emperor accepted a British alternative, in which the ambassador and his delegation kneel on one knee and bow their heads to the emperor (as they would do to their sovereign George III).

[70] The expulsion of the embassy from Beijing was caused by some misunderstanding between the two parties. While the emperor demanded to see Amherst immediately after his arrival, Amherst, who considered himself unpresentable after a long and exhausting journey, feigned illness and refused the emperor's request. Soon after the expulsion of the embassy, Jiaqing Emperor publicly blamed his officials for failing to explain to him the embassy's late arrival and Amherst's condition promptly. (Peter Kitson, '"Harder, if possible, than the emperor's heart": The Amherst Embassy and John Francis Davis's *Sketches of China*', seminar paper delivered at Durham University, May 2015).

> The principal persons of rank [in China] who, from their intercourse with us, had opportunities of *observing* our manners, tempers and discipline, very soon dismissed the prejudices they had conceived against us, and by a generous transition grew to admire and respect us as a nation and to love us as individuals.[71]

In this journal entry, both the Chinese and the British are portrayed as 'observers', while they are in the process of coming to know more about people from a different culture. According to Macartney, the Chinese officials gradually adopted a more favourable attitude towards the British embassy by observing their conduct and behaviour, while such acts of observation were watched carefully by Macartney at the same time. The diplomatic encounter between Britain and China was not a one-way process and generated an exchange of voices that is not often present in literary reproductions of China in eighteenth-century Britain.

However, the British monarchy's reception of the Chinese visitors and the Chinese monarchy's reception of the British embassies carried more differences than similarities. At the outset, the receptions were two different types of activities. Eighteenth-century Chinese visitors to Britain were individuals who travelled to Britain of their own accord, and they brought with them knowledge and skills that both fascinated and broadened the intellectual perspectives of polite Georgian society. The two British embassies to China in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries unavoidably carried with them diplomatic and commercial missions. While the first embassy was instructed to acquire more knowledge and specimens of plant life in China, the second embassy intended to address problems with trade in Beijing.[72] The reception of the British visitors in China was politically sensitive and more intense, whereas the Chinese visitor's treatment in Britain was facilitated in a relaxing and culturally inquisitive atmosphere.

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[71] Cited in Jeremy Black, *A History of Diplomacy* (London: Reaktion Books, 2010), p. 149. Italics added.

However, due to his own sense of otherness while living in Britain, Goldsmith's portrayal of the London society in *The Citizen of the World* might also be prejudiced. Whang at Tong, a well-known eighteenth-century Chinese visitor to London whose knowledge of Chinese culture and science made him popular during his stay there, recalled fond memories of dining with William Jones (a famous British orientalist of the period) and the artist Joshua Reynolds in London: 'remember the kindness of my friends in England'.[73] Moreover, unlike the ignorance and preconception of the cultured circle depicted in *The Citizen of the World*, there were a number of distinguished British individuals who showed great interest and earnestness to learn from and work with their Chinese visitors. For example, William Jones asked Whang at Tong's help with translating the first English language version of the Chinese anthology of classical poetry, *Shijing*.[74] Whang also advised the Duchess of Portland (who was a plant collector and interested in botany) about the Strawberry Begonia; Whang visited the Royal Society in January 1775, and in the same year gave useful information to the potter, Josiah Wedgewood, in London about the Chinese method of 'manufacturing their China ware'; Whang reportedly introduced acupuncture to the physician Andrew Duncan.[75] Shen Fu-Song, the first known Chinese visitor in Britain in 1685, was an educated intellectual who helped to catalogue the Chinese books in the Bodleian Library, a work no one in Britain had been capable of doing.[76] Likewise, when Whang visited Britain in the 1770s, he was requested to translate Chinese writing and also re-arranged the Chinese books and lexicon in St John's College library at Oxford.[77]

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[72] Kitson, 'The Amherst Embassy and John Francis Davis's *Sketches of China*' (seminar paper).
[73] Kitson, 'Chinese Visitors to Britain', 62.
[74] Whang had to decline Jones's invitation to collaborate due to his busy commercial schedule. 'A Letter to the President from a Young Chinese', in William Jones, 'On the Second Classical Book of the Chinese', *Asiatick Researches* (1790), *The Works of Sir William Jones* (London: G. G. and J. Robinson and R. H. Evans, 1799).

Chitqua, the first known Chinese artist to visit Europe, came to Britain in around 1770. A biographical entry on him was published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* from 1771.[78] It is the same magazine that announced his death in 1797. David Clarke describes Chitqua as 'a part of the convivial group [of enlightened Georgian society] […] not an outsider'.[79] Clarke provides examples of Chitqua's swift incorporation into the high metropolitan cultured life in London, such as his presence at the grand dinner of 23 April 1770 with fellow guests including David Garrick, George Colman, William Whitehead and Horace Walpole.[80] Despite the hospitality he had received from the refined circle of intellectuals, Chitqua also encountered hostility and suspicion in the wider world of less educated people. He was prevented from returning home in 1771 as he was deemed unwelcome by the sailors, 'probably [owing] to his strange dress and appearance'.[81] As a result of such unpleasant encounters outside of polite Georgian circles, Chitqua was persuaded to adopt British dress.[82] Chitqua's treatment demonstrates an ambivalent and uneven attitude held by eighteenth-century Britons towards foreigners from afar. On the one hand, Chitqua's visit to London caught the attention of one of the best-known magazines of the time, as the *Gentleman's Magazine* produced notices about this Chinese visitor in substantial detail; on the other hand, Chitqua was forced to compromise with a different cultural identity from his own by adopting British dress. In a way, while eighteenth-century British society made efforts to appreciate the knowledge and contribution brought by these Chinese elite visitors, it also – subtly and unavoidably – undertook to assimilate them.

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[75] Kim Sloan and S. Lloyds, *The Intimate Portrait: Drawings, Miniature and Pastels from Ramsay to Lawrence* (Edinburgh and London: National Gallery of Scotland and British Museum Press, 2008), p. 158.

[76] Kitson, 'Chinese Visitors to Britain', 57.

[77] David Clarke, *Chinese Art and Its Encounter with the World* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong UP, 2011), pp. 218-219.

[78] *Gentleman's Magazine* [1771]. Cited in Kitson, 'Chinese Visitors to Britain', 58.

[79] Clarke, *Chinese Art*, p. 33.

[80] Ibid., pp. 30-33.

Although few written accounts were left by this small number of eighteenth-century Chinese elite visitors to Britain, their voice might not be 'silent', after all.[83] We can hear it through the pens of the friends they made in Britain; we can hear it through the Chinese books that they first laid and arranged on the shelves in British libraries; we can hear it through Wedgewood's porcelain, or British botanical studies. And most of all, we can make it heard through continuing exploration of various kinds of Sino-British encounters in the eighteenth century.

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[81] *Gentleman's Magazine* [1771], 238. Cited in Kitson, 'Chinese Visitors to Britain', 59.

[82] Kitson, 'Chinese Visitors to Britain', 59.

[83] According to Kitson, the first literary account of the city of London written by a Chinese person appeared in around 1817. The author of the poem was reportedly a Chinese merchant who visited London in 1813. The poem, 'London', came to the possession of John Francis Davis in 1817, who later had it published in both its original Chinese text and his English translation in 1829, in his *Poeseos Sinensis commentarii: on the Poetry of the Chinese*. Kitson, 'Chinese Visitors to Britain', 66.

Chapter Four

'There is no better means of instruction on China than letting China speak for herself': Thomas Percy and *Hau Kiou Choaan*

On the title page of *Hau Kiou Choaan; or, The Pleasing History* (1761), Thomas Percy quotes from Jean-Baptiste Du Halde's *A Description of the Empire of China and of Chinese Tartary* (1738): 'There is no better means of instruction on China than letting China speak for herself.'[1] By quoting from Du Halde's work, Percy appears to be drawing attention to the uniqueness of his own work as a 'translation' from an authentic Chinese novel, at a time when the British public was still largely influenced by the cult of Chinoiserie and various fanciful accounts of the East.[2] It remains questionable, however, if in presenting an original piece of Chinese literature, Percy has really let China 'speak for herself'. It is reasonable to argue that *Hau Kiou Choaan* carries as much information about Percy's own perceptions of China as it does about the country itself.

In the preface to this novel, Percy refers to himself as 'the Editor' of this Chinese work (Preface). The term 'editor' might imply a subsidiary role, but in the case of *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Percy contributes a significant amount of work, including the writing of an introduction, the compilation of extensive notes, the design of the postscript and the index, and the insertion of extra materials such as a collection of Chinese proverbs.[3] Percy's particular mode of mediation in preparing *Hau Kiou Choaan* reflects tensions in Britain's encounter with Chinese literature at an early stage, when few British scholars could read Chinese literature in its original language, and when British impressions of China still rested largely on its perceived otherness and backwardness. Percy's editorial interventions in *Hau Kiou Choaan* nonetheless facilitated the development of Sino-British cultural and literary encounters beyond a mere imaginary Western vision of the East that had predominated in Europe up until the eighteenth century.

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[1] The quotation from Du Halde's work appears in French (the language it was originally published in) on the title page of *Hau Kiou Choaan*. The complete French quotation is as follows: 'Il n'y a pas de meilleur moyen de s'instruire de la Chine, que par la Chine même: car par la on est sûr de ne se point tromper, dans la connaissance du génie, et des usages de cette nation.' Thomas Percy, *Hau Kiou Choaan* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1761), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/>. All subsequent references to this novel will appear in-text. The English translation of the French quotation is provided by T. N. Foss and D. F. Lach, in 'Images of Asia and Asians in European Fiction, 1500-1800', Thomas H. C. Lee (ed.), *China and Europe: Images and Influences in Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries* (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1991), p. 184.

[2] Despite its claim to be a 'translation', *Hau Kiou Choaan* contains a considerable amount of Percy's own notes that shape the readers' understanding of the text.

Upon the publication of *Hau Kiou Choaan* in 1761, the British public did not readily accept the novel's claim of being an authentic piece of Chinese literature. In the opening section of the preface to this novel, Percy describes how he acquired the manuscript of the Chinese novel in translation: the manuscript was found among the papers of a gentleman who had resided in China and translated the novel from Chinese to English (and Portuguese) as – it seems – a form of language practice.[4]

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[3] Three shorter pieces of work are added to *Hau Kiou Choaan*: I. 'The argument or story of a Chinese play', II. 'A collection of Chinese proverbs', and III. 'Fragments of Chinese poetry: with a dissertation'. Each of these three works is introduced by an Advertisement from Percy. Percy claims that 'The argument or story of a Chinese play' was found among papers of a gentleman, and adds to the work extensive notes and comments as he does in *Hau Kiou Choaan* (vol. IV, p. 171). In 'A collection of Chinese proverbs', Percy states that the proverbs have been chiefly taken from translations of Chinese works provided by Du Halde and the missionaries. Percy's footnotes in this work consist mainly of references to the proverbs (vol. III, p. 183). In 'Fragments of Chinese poetry', Percy observes that these fragments are almost all that have been published in European languages, and similarly inserts his own notes and comments (vol. IV, p. 199). This chapter will not study these three works in detail due to two main reasons. First, the focus of this chapter is Percy's original preparation of a piece of Chinese work, thus the Chinese proverbs – which are collected from other published sources – do not sufficiently reflect Percy's own treatment of Chinese works. Second, Percy's treatment of the other two shorter pieces of work (above) are similar to that of the main text – *Hau Kiou Choaan* – in that he inserts in the works his own comments and annotations.

[4] This original manuscript has never been found. T. C. Fan, 'Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan*', *Review of English Studies*, 22/86 (1946), 117-125, at p. 117. Also in Eun Kyung Min, note to 'Thomas Percy's Chinese Miscellanies and the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry', in *China and the Writing of*

However, Percy's lengthy description of the origin of the manuscript failed to satisfy at least some of his readers. T. C. Fan points out that immediately after the novel was published, doubt was raised about its authenticity. Percy, feeling disturbed, thus inquired about the novel in China through the East India Company, and inserted the 'Extract of a Letter from Canton' to prove the authenticity of the Chinese novel at the end of the second edition of his *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1767); however, this letter was immediately pronounced as a forgery. Moreover, when questions were cast upon the incompleteness of information that Percy had provided in the preface to the novel, such as the absence of the name of the 'gentleman' among whose documents the manuscript was obtained, Percy seemed to have then looked into the problem. In the Advertisement to a re-issue of *Hau Kiou Choaan* in 1774, he identifies the owner of the manuscript as 'Mr. James Wilkinson, an English merchant, equally respected for his ability and his probity'.[5] By emphasising the 'ability' and 'probity' of the owner and translator of the manuscript, Percy seems eager to reassure the reader of the

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English Literary Modernity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), p. 239. The opening lines of the preface outline how the manuscript was first acquired by Percy: 'The following translation was found in manuscript, among the papers of a gentleman who had large concerns in the East-India Company, and occasionally resided much at Canton (the manuscript is dated 1719). It is believed by his relations, that he had bestowed considerable attention on the Chinese language, and that this translation (or at least part of it) was undertaken by him as a kind of exercise while he was studying it […] it should seem to have been drawn up under the direction of a Chinese master or tutor'. Percy also observes that the manuscript consists of 4 volumes: 'the three first [sic] of these volumes are in English: the fourth in Portuguese; and written in a different hand from the former. This part the Editor hath now translated into our own language'. However, Percy does not write in detail about the possible involvement of different translators in the original manuscript of the novel.

[5] Fan, 'Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan*', p. 117. In his footnotes in this article, Fan mentions that L. F. Powell has collected the essential documents on the controversy over the manuscript of this novel (Powell, 'Hau Kiou Choaan', *The Review of English Studies*, II, 446-55). The re-issue of this novel was never published. Although Fan wrote this article in 1946, he is a special critic in the studies of China in English Literature. Fan is one of the earliest Chinese scholars to have undertaken research in the West on Sino-British literary encounters; he was capable of studying the Chinese texts both in their original language and in their translations, and thus was in a favourable position of drawing comprehensive cross-cultural comparisons. Fan's study has been an important reference for many of his successors in their studies of *Hau Kiou Choaan*.

authenticity of the Chinese novel. Percy worked industriously in the process of compiling *Hau Kiou Choaan*. In 'A LIST of books from whence the following Notes are extracted' that follows the Preface, he claims to have consulted twenty-six books on China (a number of them in multiple volumes) while he was editing this novel (vol. I, pp. xxix-xxxi). Percy borrowed books from a neighbouring Captain Wilkinson, from publisher Robert Dodsley, from the Earl of Sussex's library, as well as from other sources.[6] The extent of Percy's laborious industry in his composition of the notes can be perceived through not only the fully annotated main text, but his further corrections and additions to the notes. Percy continued revising his notes and collecting materials while *Hau Kiou Choaan* was in the press, and appended his 'Additions and Corrections' to each volume of the novel.[7]

In the preface to this novel, Percy also provides a detailed account of how his notes function in the text. He suggests that '[the notes] might procure the book a second perusal', and assures the reader that 'they are extracted from the best and most authentic writers on the subject' (vol. I, p. xxvi). The essential role of the notes is also evident on the title page of *Hau Kiou Choaan*: 'WITH NOTES' appears beneath the full title of the novel and is printed in the second biggest font size on that page.[8]

However, as will be discussed further in this chapter, Percy's notes can also interrupt and distort the meaning of the main text. Fan attributes Percy's inconsistent approach to compiling his notes to the two very different types of accounts of China in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century-Europe. The missionaries tended to describe the brighter sides of the country due to their greater knowledge and interest in the wisdoms of Chinese language and literature. But merchants were more inclined to portray the country from less optimistic perspectives, since their trading experience was not always positive. Fan argues that '[Percy] read all [sources from both sides], or almost all, but approved of few', but he also observes that Percy 'was forever balancing between the two sides of the Chinese character, and so falling into impertinent digressions and an apparent inconsistency.'[9] Fan's argument is also discussed by Kitson in his study of the text. Kitson chooses to focus on Percy's 'more negative comments [of China]', as he views Percy's Chinese writing as 'the anticipator of a new Romantic Sinology' that increasingly deviates from the canonical sinology set by the Jesuits.[10] It is likely to be true, given his extensive readings about China while he was producing the notes for *Hau Kiou Choaan*, that Percy read as many sources on China as he could possibly find at the time; however, whether he was consciously balancing between the different views of China shown in those sources is open to question. There is little sign in his writing that Percy feels perplexed while incorporating what he has read into *Hau Kiou Choaan*. The way he uses the notes in this text shows how readily he shapes the sources in order to convey his own ideas.

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[6] Fan, 'Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan*', p. 123. Captain Wilkinson's uncle is James Wilkinson, translator of *Hau Kiou Choaan* and representative of the English East India Company. Wilkinson's relatives believed that James Wilkinson undertook the translation of *Hau Kiou Choaan* from the Chinese language, while he was learning Chinese in Canton. Eun Kyung Min, 'Thomas Percy's Chinese Miscellanies', p. 165.

[7] Fan, 'Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan*', p. 124.

[8] A copy of the title page is included in the Appendices of this thesis.

Hau Kiou Choaan literally means 'a story of good spouse' in Chinese. At one point in the novel, the hero quietly reflects upon the virtue of the heroine, and comments that ‘Whoever can obtain her will be very happy’ (vol. 2, p. 197); this can be seen as the driving element of the storyline of the novel. In ‘Thomas Percy and His Chinese Studies’, Chen Shouyi points out that

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[9] Fan, 'Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan*', p. 125.
[10] Kitson, 'Thomas Percy', p. 37.

> the Chinese novel was interesting to European readers only as a mirror of Chinese ideas and manners, but not as a piece of creative art, in which field they ranked the *Hau Kiou Choaan* very low. It is beyond a shadow of doubt that this work was never read in Europe as a model for composition.[11]

Chen’s observation is only partly justified. While it is reasonable to argue that European readers’ primary attraction to the Chinese novel would lie in the work’s reflection of Chinese customs and culture, it is questionable whether *Hau Kiou Choaan*’s perceived weakness as a piece of creative art was entirely due to its being Chinese. In eighteenth-century China, the novel was not considered as a serious form of literature by the elite literati class, and this was congruous with the status of the novel in Britain of the period. One can argue that *Hau Kiou Choaan* did not represent the best of Chinese literature of the eighteenth century, and its reception in Europe might have been associated also with the general controversy surrounding the novel at the time.

The Chinese novel carries a long history. Although there had already been a number of fictional writings in earlier centuries that came close to the modern definition of the novel, it was from around the fourteenth century (Chinese Ming Dynasty) that the novel came into more common use as a specific literary genre.[12] In the late-seventeenth and the eighteenth centuries (early Chinese Qing dynasty), the novel remained a controversial literary genre despite the age's production of some of the best-known classic Chinese novels, including *Hongloumeng* (*Dream of the Red Chamber*), *Rulin Waishi* (*The Scholars*), and *Liaozhai Zhiyi* (*Strange Stories from a Chinese Studio*). This status of the novel was partly due to the cultural and political systems in China in the period. Social advancement was commonly achieved through the imperial examination (the 'keju'), which involved stereotyped writings of the 'eight-legged essay'.[13] The questions in the writing exam focused on the Confucian classics, including *The Analects of Confucius*, *The Book of Mencius*, *The Daxue* (*Great Learning*) and *The Zhongyong* (*Doctrine of the Mean*), which was ranked at the top of the generic hierarchy of cultural discourses. Imperial examination both unified the Chinese civil service and promoted centralisation of political power in China. Novel-reading, on the contrary, was generally considered to be an activity for leisure, and was not largely seen to contribute to the betterment of one's material life as predominant forms of literature did.

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[11] Chen Shouyi, ‘Thomas Percy and His Chinese Studies’, *The Vision of China in the English Literature of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries*, ed. Adrian Hsia (Hong Kong: Chinese University Press, 1998), pp. 301-324, at p. 302.

[12] Three of the four masterpieces of the classic Chinese novel were written in the Ming Dynasty, including *Sanguozhi yanyi* (*Romance of the Three Kingdoms*), *Shuihuzhuan* (*Water Margin*), and

The Chinese novel, which was regarded as inferior to classical historiographies such as the Confucian texts, was believed to carry the potential for subversion. For example, bans were imposed with severe punishment in the Ming dynasty against the practice of subcultural discourses such as fiction, drama and balladry; in 1709, emperor Kang Xi promulgated 'a strict and perpetual prohibition

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Xiyouji (*Journey to the West*). The other masterpiece of the classic novel – *Hongloumeng* (*Dream of the Red Chamber*) was written in the middle of the following dynasty – Qing Dynasty (mid-eighteenth century).

[13] The 'Keju' examination was operated in ancient China for around 1300 years. It was first introduced in 587 (Sui Dynasty), and was finally abolished in 1905 (Qing Dynasty).

against omen reading, magic-figure drawing, obscene balladry and novel'; in 1728, a high-ranking official was removed from office by the Yongzheng emperor because he made a reference to a novel in an official memorandum.[14] Many Chinese thinkers of the age criticised the novel for its perceived sensuality and spontaneity, which, in their eyes, conflicted with Confucian commitment to virtue, order and self-cultivation.[15] However, such understandings of the novel are narrow and restricted, for there had been plenty of novels up to the eighteenth century that reflected upon the goodness of morality and the fulfilment of the self. In 'The Novel in Premodern China', Andrew H. Plaks rightly argues that many Chinese novels of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

> reveal the consistent Confucian understanding of the self as the intersection of the inner seat of consciousness and the outer face of its concrete interaction with the surrounding web of human relations and the broader social and cosmic order.[16]

In this sense, the Chinese novel is capable of depicting traditional thoughts and Confucian philosophies through its fictional characteristics. Indeed, in *Hau Kiou Choaan*, the hero and the heroine practice strict allegiance to social protocols of order and property. For example, the hero takes and passes the imperial examination in order to see himself as more deserving to marry the woman he admires. And when the hero and the heroine have to stay in the same house, they operate strict social etiquettes for unmarried men and women.[17] Essentially, the Chinese novel and the English novel shared similar status in the eighteenth century: despite the novel's reflection upon real life, readers and critics cast doubt upon this relatively new narrative form and received it with mixed feelings. *Hau Kiou Choaan*, in this sense, was not a distant text to eighteenth-century British readers; despite differences in cultural and social philosophies between China and Britain, the novel provoked similar sentiments and reactions among readers in eighteenth-century China and Britain alike.

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[14] Henry Y. H. Zhao, 'Historiography and Fiction in Chinese Culture', in *The Novel* (vol. I), ed. Franco Moretti (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), pp. 79-80.

[15] Andrew H. Plaks, 'The Novel in Premodern China', in *The Novel* (vol. I), ed. Moretti, p. 209.

[16] Ibid.

Hau Kiou Choaan revolves around a complex plot about the pursuit of love and marriage. Shuey-ping-sin, the motherless heroine of seventeen, is the only child of a respected Chinese military officer who has been unjustly sent into exile due to a political conspiracy. The heroine's uncle, Shuey-guwin, secretly longing to inherit his brother's large estate and property, plots to marry off his niece who is now the keeper of her father's estate, in order to take sole charge of the family's wealth. Shuey-guwin then finds Kwo-khé-tzu, a young man from an influential family in the local area, and attempts to match him to his niece. Upon beholding the heroine from a distance (an opportunity devised by Shuey-guwin), Kwo-khé-tzu is bewitched by the beautiful Shuey-ping-sin and immediately decides to propose marriage to her. The heroine, however, is acquainted with the bad reputation of Kwo-khé-tzu and already sees through her uncle's plot. She manages to let her uncle marry his own ugly daughter, Ghiang-koo, to Kwo-khé-tzu instead, through a series of witty battles. Kwo-khé-tzu is furious upon discovery of the real bride after the wedding, and the rest of the novel sees him plot with various characters, such as the heroine's uncle and the local officials, in attempts to secure a union with the heroine.[18]

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[17] This episode will be discussed in more detail in this chapter.

The hero, Tieh-chung-u, is the son of a senior official of China, and saves the heroine from being kidnapped by Kwo-khé-tzu. Kwo-khé-tzu, angered by the hero's interruption of his plot, soon takes the opportunity to avenge the hero by secretly poisoning him. This time, it is the heroine who promptly discovers the vile action taken against the hero, and she immediately brings the poisoned Tieh-chung-u back to her house to be looked after. While the hero and the heroine gradually become attracted to each other, they take care not to breach the social codes that expect a single man and a single woman to behave formally unless they are officially engaged to be married. Despite their precautions, rumours spread about the unusual relationship between the hero and the heroine, and the heroine is criticised for taking the hero to her own house against social conventions for unmarried ladies. While Kwo-khé-tzu continues in his pursuit of the heroine, the heroine always manages to see through his trap and therefore saves herself from a forced marriage. The novel ends with the marriage of the hero and the heroine, a union of mutual respect and admiration. The union is approved of by their parents (the heroine's father is cleared of the charges and comes home), and is sanctioned by the emperor, who proves through physicians at the court that the heroine is chaste before marriage.

Published at a time of the rise and development of the novel in Britain, *Hau*

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[18] It is only after the wedding night that Kwo-khé-tzu discovers that he has married the wrong bride. In the wedding ceremony of ancient China, the bride's face is covered by a piece of cloth. On the wedding night, Ghiang-koo successfully keeps her disguise as she requests the servants to turn off the lights, so that her husband shall not see her face. As a result, her husband cannot find out that she is not the person whom he wished to marry. *Hau Kiou Choaan*, p. 113 and p. 116.

Kiou Choaan bears some resemblance to the conventional plotline of virtue finding its due reward in British sentimental fiction in the eighteenth century. In his Dedication to the Countess of Sussex in the opening of this novel, Percy describes *Hau Kiou Choaan* as 'a moral disquisition [...] at a time when this nation [Britain] swarms with fictitious narratives of the most licentious and immoral turn' (Dedication, n. p.). It is a work 'designed to countenance virtue and discourage vice', and shows 'what strict regard to virtue and decorum is paid by writers amongst the Chinese (Dedication).' Percy wrote in a period when the development of the novel in Britain generated ongoing debates as to whether or not the genre was sufficiently serious in form and meaning; for example, the over-sentimental mood and supposedly questionable tastes in some English novels were particularly criticised for their potential to lead young readers astray. Here in the Dedication, Percy appears to be adopting the conventional trope of interpreting a foreign culture as an instrument of observing problems lurking inside Britain. Immediately following his remarks on the moral value of the Chinese text, Percy notes 'the deplorable ignorance they [the Chinese writers] labor under of those sublime and noble truths, which we enjoy to so little purpose' (Dedication, n. p.). This comment suggests that the nominal Christianity of the British people does not enable them to assume a greater position than the Chinese in terms of virtue and morality. As a bishop, Percy is here expressing some disillusionment about the role of Christianity in his country and about the success of the Christian message in his own time. Elsewhere in the novel, however, Percy clearly defends the superiority of British morality by seeking to undermine Chinese ethical values. For example, at an early point in the novel, Percy attacks the Chinese author's portrayal of the heroine as 'a perfect exemplar of all virtue' in a footnote:

> The Chinese morals, notwithstanding their boasted purity, evidently fall short of the Christian, since they know not how to inspire that open and ingenious simplicity, void of all guile, which more elevated principles of morality propose to our esteem and imitation. (vol. I, p. 129)

In this instance, Percy places Christian morals above Chinese morals by suggesting that only the former is pure and genuine. Percy's preface to this novel and his extensive notes in the text will demonstrate that the editor does not perceive the writings of the Chinese as a means to regenerate or energize the literary culture of Britain, which he seems to imply in his letter of Dedication.

The theme of Christianity versus Chinese ethical beliefs reappears with increased weight in the main text of the novel. At the point when Shuey-ping-sin reflects upon Kwo-khé-tzu's attempt to kidnap her from her own house and carry her away to marry him, she claims that 'The outrage was very notorious: yet who then appeared in my behalf […] the injury then offered me was too great ever to be forgotten'. In his note on this occasion, Percy criticises the heroine for being incapable of Christian forgiveness:

> The Morality of the Chinese Author in this and the preceding page appears in a very contemptible light compared with the Christian, which so strongly recommends the forgiveness of injuries and the return of good for evil. (vol. II, p. 51)

Percy follows by copying down a list of biblical verses on forgiveness from the Gospels.

Although he mentions that Confucius' teachings on forgiveness share some similar values with those of the Scripture, Percy insists on the inferiority of the Chinese ethics by claiming that even Confucius does not describe the return of good for evil as 'a duty' (vol. II, pp. 50-51). James Watt argues that 'Percy's note ignores the actual content of [the heroine's] distress, and focuses instead upon the manner in which she articulates her sense of grievance'.[19] It is crucial to pay attention to the fact that the heroine is speaking these words to her uncle in the process of justifying her action of bringing the poisoned Tieh-chung-u back to her house. She highlights that her gratitude for Tieh-chung-u (a stranger who has saved her from being kidnapped by Kwo-khé-tzu) is as intense as her hatred for the people who kidnapped her.

Watt is right here in identifying a difference between the heroine's words and her circumstances. Indeed, although she pronounces her hatred towards the people who have attempted to endanger her, Shuey-ping-sin is far more benevolent in action. There is thus also a difference between her words and her actions. For example, when Tieh-chung-u swears to take revenge on the local official, Che-bien, who is involved in poisoning him, Shuey-ping-sin successfully persuades him to drop his plan by suggesting that Che-bien might have his own unspeakable difficulties, such as his fear of offending Kwo-khé-tzu, whose father has power over Che-bien himself:

> To procure the disgrace of the [sic] Che-bien will be an easy matter; which will appear to be in consequence of his own evil actions […] What wonder then if he was afraid to offend a youth of such connections? Had he refused him his

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[19] James Watt, 'Thomas Percy, China, and the Gothic', *The Eighteenth Century*, 48/2 (2007), 95-109, at p. 98.

> assistance, he might fear he would get him removed from his office. Consider, Sir, it is a post, which it cost him a long course of study to obtain. He must have spent fifteen or twenty years in passing through his degrees before he could be advanced to it. Judge then how dreadful the loss of it must appear: and wonder not if he was tempted to use even indirect means to secure it. Upon the whole, I think you had better pardon him; and give yourself no farther trouble about a man, who is rather the object of your pity. (vol. II, pp. 85-87)

Percy does not insert any note beneath this section of the text, which, it can be argued, is an example of the heroine's capacity for forgiveness. It is also a good example for contradicting Percy's prior implication that the heroine cannot return good for evil. The heroine's actions demonstrate that while it may be difficult to love an enemy, one can counteract the desire for revenge and choose not to harm the enemy in return. Furthermore, when Che-bien later hears about Shuey-ping-sin's good words on his behalf, he is moved to repent his past conduct against her and starts to help and protect her from further danger (vol. II, pp. 101-107). This instance exemplifies how goodness can be passed on from one person to another: the heroine's kindness to Che-bien brings about his repentance, as he then seeks to return her goodness by becoming a better man, which is similar to the Christian idea of redemption and salvation.

While preparing the English translation of the Chinese novel for publication, Percy first approached the publisher, Ralph Griffith, through James Grainger. Grainger wrote to Percy in February 1758 that Percy's work did not quite meet the requirements of the publisher: 'He [Griffith] did not seem to approve of the manner in which you propose to treat that fair foreigner [Shui-ping-Sin]. He wants a pleasing romance, and you talk of a faithful copy.'[20] It seems that while Percy intended to provide for publication a work of translation, the publisher wished to put greater emphasis on the novel's creative appeal and entertaining qualities. It is probable that part of the novel's title – *'The Pleasing History'* – was shaped by Griffith's advice, for it does not match the meaning of the original Chinese title. Soon after this correspondence, Percy received further instructions from the publisher, that he is to 'add notes to explain the more uncommon customs, and […] to introduce the whole with a prefatory discourse upon the manner of writing in China.'[21] If this instruction was the initial reason for Percy's inclusion of footnotes in *Hau Kiou Choaan*, he had surely done more than he was required by inserting his subjective views both about the story and China alongside a factual introduction to Chinese customs and manners. Although Griffith did not accept *Hau Kiou Choaan* in the end, the publisher's doubts and uncertainties may have reflected similar views of some eighteenth-century readers at a time when 'literary' imports from the East were still rare.[22]

It is important that *Hau Kiou Choaan* is a work that comes from China, for this makes the work fundamentally different from imaginary and fictitious writings on China (or the East in general) that were already familiar to eighteenth-century British readers. In 'Thomas Percy and the forging of Romantic China', Peter Kitson argues that

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[20] Cited in John Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century* (London: printed for the author, 1817-58), vol. VII, p. 249.

[21] Ibid., vol. VII, p. 250.

[22] Grainger wrote to Percy on July 20th 1758 that 'Griffith has sent me back the Chinese Lady'. *Hau Kiou Choaan* was eventually published by Dodsley on November 14th 1761. Cited in Nichols, *Illustrations of the Literary History of the Eighteenth Century*, vol. VII, p. 261.

> Percy's text […] is not simply an imaginative recreation of China, a work of fashionable literary chinoiserie, nor another satirical depiction of Britain employing a bemused Chinese foil, but rather a serious, if flawed, attempt to translate and understand China, the pioneering project of a nascent British Romantic Sinology.[23]

Percy's laborious efforts in his investigation into the source of the manuscript reinforce the significance of the work's credibility. The authenticity of the Chinese text creates fresh space for the development of studies of Sino-British encounters in the eighteenth century.

There remains no difficulty now in verifying *Hau Kiou Choaan* as a translation from a Chinese novel of the Chinese Qing Dynasty.[24] The doubts raised about the novel's authenticity in the eighteenth century were possibly influenced by the age's production of some of the best-known literary forgeries and pseudo-translations of British authors, such as James Macpherson's *Ossian* (1760) and Thomas Chatterton's *Rowley Poems* (1767).[25] Both *Ossian* and the *Rowley Poems* claim to be rooted in ancient sources but are actually the invention of their eighteenth-century authors. Comparably, some of the earliest English novels, including *Robinson Crusoe* and *Moll Flanders*, were fictional texts presented to readers as actual life stories. The boundaries between fiction and reality were thus blurred in the literary context of the eighteenth century. And the invention of Chinese culture in eighteenth-century Britain was also prevalent in other artistic forms, such as the artificial pagodas built in many British gardens, or the sixty-eight dramas about China that were presented on the European stage in this century (among which only one was authentically Chinese), or Josiah Wedgewood's British-made Chinese porcelains.[26]

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[23] Peter Kitson, 'Thomas Percy and the forging of Romantic China', *Forging Romantic China*, pp. 26-44, at p. 27.

[24] In all the Chinese materials I consulted, *Hau Kiou Choaan* is referred to as a novel of the Chinese Qing Dynasty (c.1644 – 1912). The exact year of publication is not mentioned in these materials. In the preface to *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Percy mentions that the manuscript is dated 1719; therefore, the original Chinese novel should have been published sometime between the second half of the seventeenth century and the early eighteenth century.

[25] A number of critics have made similar point in their works relating to *Hau Kiou Choaan*. For example, Fan, 'Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan*', p. 119; Kitson, 'Thomas Percy', p. 33; Chen, 'Thomas Percy and His Chinese Studies', p. 304.

Indeed, Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (1765), a very influential work of his time, was accused of being a forgery. While Percy claimed that he rescued the original folio manuscript of the old songs and ballads in 1753, his contemporary Joseph Ritson suggested that the original manuscript did not exist at all.[27] In his own published works, Ritson suggests that the 'learned collector [Percy] has preferred his ingenuity to his fidelity', and criticises Percy for scarcely printing 'a single poem […] fairly or honestly' and for practising 'every kind of forgery and imposture'.[28] In his biographical entry on Percy, Roy Palmer observes that Ritson's criticisms had been broadly justified when the folio manuscript was published in 1867-8, and have been similarly endorsed by most scholars since then.[29] Although *Hau Kiou Choaan* was not a forgery like the *Reliques*, Percy's peculiar approaches to sources and manuscripts can shape a reader's response to his editorial claims and particular ideas on the subject matter of his texts.

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[26] Information about the number of dramas pertaining to China that were performed in Europe in the eighteenth century is taken from Adrienne Ward, *Pagodas in Play*, p. 15. See p. 105 of this thesis for more discussion on this topic. For Josiah Wedgewood's porcelains, see pp. 71-72, 147 of this thesis for more discussion.

[27] Roy Palmer, 'Thomas Percy', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://www.oxforddnb.com>.

[28] J. Ritson, ed., *Ancient Songs and Ballads*, 1792, pp. xix-xxi; and Ritson, *Romanceës*, 1802, pp. cix-cxliii n. Both sources are provided in Palmer's biographical entry on Percy, *ODNB*.

[29] Palmer, 'Thomas Percy'.

Uncertainties about the authenticity of *Hau Kiou Choaan* might have also been generated by the unconventional circumstances in which the source material was provided. Missionaries and merchants were the two major groups from Europe who travelled to China in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Prior to the publication of *Hau Kiou Choaan*, translations of Chinese books already existed, yet nearly all of them were made by missionaries (especially the Jesuits).[30] Thus it was reasonable to cast doubt upon the first work of translation purportedly made by an English merchant.

In 1829, the British Sinologist, John Francis Davis, provided a new translation of *Hau Kiou Choaan* and called it *Fortunate Union*.[31] In his preface to *Fortunate Union*, Davis describes Percy's work as 'little better than a copious abstract' of the Chinese original.[32] Davis's comment on the textual quality of *Hau Kiou Choaan* might be slightly exaggerated. Although the chapter divisions of *Hau Kiou Choaan* are not the same as those of the Chinese original, *Hau Kiou Choaan* covers the full plot line of the original text.[33] Davis's English translation of the text was a significant improvement in terms of sentence structure. While *Hau Kiou Choaan* fails to differentiate in translation between dialogues and statements in many instances, *The Fortunate Union* takes care to match its narrative discourses to that of the Chinese novel. Although Davis observes that in Percy's edition of the novel 'much was mistranslated, much interpolated, and a great deal omitted altogether', he readily recognises the merit of Percy's labours: 'he most ably edited, and very correctly illustrated (except where his version misled him) what certainly was, at the time when it appeared, by far the best picture of Chinese manners and society that we possessed.'[34] It is, however, hard to judge whether the flaws in the language are solely due to the limited knowledge of the translator (Mr James Wilkinson), as Percy also admits he makes further omissions from the manuscript in his preface to the novel.[35]

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[30] Earlier translations of Chinese works include, for example, D' Entrecolles' translation of portions of *Chin Ku Chi'Kwan* in c.1650 and Joseph de Prémare's translation of *The Little Orphan of the Family of Tchao* prior to 1735. Translations of Chinese literary works are discussed by Fan in 'Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan*', p. 118.

[31] John Francis Davis, *Fortunate Union, A Romance* (London: the Oriental Translation Fund, 1829), Internet Archive, last accessed 30 September 2018, <https://archive.org>.

[32] Davis, preface to *Fortunate Union* (1829), vol. I, p. viii.

[33] The original Chinese novel is divided into 18 sections. Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan* consists of 40 chapters (10 chapters per volume). *The Fortunate Union* consists of 18 chapters as does the Chinese original.

Despite attempts that were meant to familiarize China to Britain, China was still a foreign and unreachable place for the majority of people in Britain in this period; the space between perceived understandings and concrete knowledge of China stimulated increasingly lively explorations into this country and its literature and culture. Indeed, while knowledge of China in Britain gradually developed in strength and depth, Chinese scholars also discovered fresh aspects of their own literature and culture through the ways in which such knowledge appeals to other cultures. For example, although the Chinese original of *Hau Kiou Choaan* was believed to be a well-known work in China in the eighteenth century, it has not been a particularly widely read book among Chinese people today.[36] However, the work's reputation as 'one of the ten masterpieces of prose fiction' in Europe during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries has both drawn attention from scholarship on China and contributed to the continuous interest in the Chinese original.[37] In his article, Fan claims that 'whatever interest modern Chinese scholars have in the work is barely kept alive by the existence of foreign versions, of which Percy's was the first.'[38] While Fan might have gone a bit too far in suggesting that Chinese scholarship on *Hau Kiou Choaan* was solely driven by the text's popularity in Europe, the close relation between the novel's original and foreign versions reflects the mutuality of cultural influences beyond an immediate eighteenth-century context.

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[34] Davis, preface to *Fortunate Union*, vol. I, p. x.

[35] In the preface to the novel, Percy claims that 'Sometimes where the narrative was insupportably diffuse and languid, interrupted by short questions and answers of no consequence, or retarded by dull and unmeaning repetitions: in these cases he [the Editor] could not help somewhat shortening and contracting it' (vol. I, pp. xxi-xxii).

[36] The Chinese original should have enjoyed a good reception in China in the eighteenth century, for – as Percy rightly suggests – 'That book would naturally be put first into the hands of a foreigner,

In his preface to *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Percy frankly admits that the Chinese text and literary works of his own culture have nothing in common: '[when] examined by the laws of European criticism, he [the Editor] believes it [*Hau Kiou Choaan*] liable to many objections' (vol. I, p. xii). Among the many flaws listed by Percy are the imagery that is 'often neither exact nor lively', the narrative that is 'frequently dry and tedious', and the taste that shows 'a littleness and poverty of genius' (vol. I, p. xii). Moreover, Percy moves on from commenting on *Hau Kiou Choaan* to expressing his views on the Chinese at large. He argues that the 'littleness and poverty of genius' are present in 'almost all the works of taste of the Chinese', and inserts a footnote here to claim that 'perhaps their taste in gardening ought to be excepted' (vol. I, p. xii). The careful insertion carries a slightly light-hearted tone, as it seems only to reinforce Percy's view

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which is in highest repute among the natives' (Preface, vol. I, p. xi).

[37] Fan, 'Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan*', p. 119.

[38] Information about the novel's popularity in Europe is provided by Fan, in 'Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan*', p. 119.

that Chinese taste in general is lacking in value. In the same paragraph, Percy attributes the poverty of genius in the Chinese to 'that servile submission, and dread of novelty, which inslaves [their] minds' (vol. I, p. xiii). In a work that is shaped by Percy's lengthy notes, which work as explanations for Chinese customs and culture throughout the main text as well as in the preface, it is surprising to find that Percy does not provide reasons here for his accounts of the general character of the Chinese. Having consulted twenty-six books about China as references for his notes in *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Percy would have provided the source of his claim if he had evidence. Unfounded claims such as this are also present in Percy's notes on the main text of this novel, most of which suggest not only the cultural differences between China and Britain, but also the inferiority of Chinese cultural values.

Nonetheless, in the preface, Percy readily points out that *Hau Kiou Choaan* is a more truthful account of the East than most works written on the topic available in Britain in the period:

> For it must be allowed to our present work, that the conduct of the story is more regular and artful than is generally seen in the compositions of the East; hath less of the marvelous and more of the probable. It contains an unity of design or fable, and the incidents all tend to one end, in a regular natural manner, with little interruption or incoherence. (vol. I, p. xiv)

Moreover, Percy observes that Chinese writers 'pay a greater regard to truth and nature in their fictitious narratives, than any other of the Asiatics' (vol. I, p. xiv). Just as with his serious efforts to convince the reader that the novel is authentically Chinese, Percy sees the value of this work in its probability and naturalness, in contrast to the illusions and fantasies that are often associated with eighteenth-century eastern tales. While the editor does not appreciate the novel's literary qualities, he acknowledges the uniqueness of the work's subject matter in its probable account of the lives of Chinese people. In Percy's own words, he offers *Hau Kiou Choaan* 'not as a piece to be admired for the beauties of its composition, but as a curious specimen of Chinese literature' (vol. I, p. xiv).

The preface shows some inconsistencies in Percy's editorial claims. On the one hand, he appears to be adopting a neutral standpoint with regard to the reception of the novel as a literary work, as he suggests that 'the Editor is not concerned about the judgment that will be passed on this performance [...] and leaves to the critics to decide its merit' (Preface, pp. xiv-xv). On the other hand, his references to China in the preface have a tendency to focus on negative elements. Percy not only lists a number of flaws that he has found in this novel and relates them to the supposed poverty of genius and taste in the Chinese writers (as discussed previously), but also emphasises that he will neither 'conceal nor exterminate' such faults in this work (vol. I, pp. xiv-xv). There are also other inconsistencies in Percy's accounts of China, such as his summaries of the 'bright' and 'dark' sides of the Chinese in the index of *Hau Kiou Choaan* (vol. IV, Index). In this index, there are two headings under the term 'Chinese': 'the dark side of their character' and 'the bright side of their character'. Examples from the first category include 'corrupt', 'insincere' and 'greedy of gain'; and examples from the second category include 'decent, industrious and modest'. Some of the listed qualities appear to contradict each other; for example, it is hard to imagine decent and modest people being proud and crafty. Perhaps Percy tries to describe the character of the Chinese people both at its best and at its worst, but such generalisation carries negative undertones nonetheless. It appears that it is human nature in general, rather than the character of the Chinese people, that Percy is really describing here. Percy's use of an index in a novel presents the text as more of a study book than a story, but this seems exactly what he would like it to be.

In his preface to *The Citizen of the World* (1762), Oliver Goldsmith (a close friend of Percy's) describes what is perhaps the most important motif in his own work: 'the truth is, the Chinese and we are *pretty much alike*. Different degrees of refinement, and not of distance, mark the distinctions among mankind.'[39] In his preface to *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Percy has written something that can be treated as a counterpart to Goldsmith's claim: 'The manners and customs of the Chinese, their peculiar ways of thinking, and modes of expression are *so remote from our own*' (vol. I, pp. xxiv-xxv, italics added). The contrast between the two authors' approaches to China clearly reveals Percy's unwillingness to seek identification between cultures. In Ros Ballaster's words, Percy's treatment of the novel's Chinese milieu sought 'to promote estrangement rather than identification'.[40] It is hard to tell if Percy truly engages with the literature of China while editing *Hau Kiou Choaan*; perhaps the Chinese novel remains for him 'a curious specimen' – a mere phenomenon to be commented on (Preface, vol. I, p. xiv).

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[39] Oliver Goldsmith, Preface, *The Citizen of the World*, ed. Friedman. Italics added. At first reading, *The Citizen of the World* might invite comparison with Montesquieu's *The Persian Letters* (1721) – both works adopt the epistolary structure and engage characters that travel in foreign countries; however, the emphasis in this chapter is firmly on representations of China.

[40] Ros Ballaster, *Fabulous Orients*, p. 238.

The first six chapters of *Hau Kiou Choaan* focus on introducing the novel's main characters. While each of the characters is being described, Percy provides extensive notes on a range of areas related to the Chinese, such as their family relations, belief and worship, and the Chinese names. For example, in a note on the name of the heroine's cousin, 'Ghiang-koo', Percy first explains that this name means 'sweet young woman' in Chinese, and then notes an observation made by Du Halde of Chinese names: 'no nation in the world abounds with more fantastical names than the Chinese' (vol. I, p.72). Percy concludes the note by claiming that '[Du Halde's observation] is a proof that they [the Chinese] have unmeaning and improper ones [names]' (vol. I, p.72). Looking into the reference to Du Halde's work provided by Percy in this note, readers can examine Du Halde's words in *A Description of the Empire of China* for themselves:

> We may remark, by the bye, that there is no Nation in the World which abounds so much in odd Titles to their Books as the Chinese Nations: The Names they give to Countries, and to many other things, discover this Fantasticalness; not but that these Names frequently have a good Meaning included in them.[41]

Du Halde and Percy hold different opinions on the 'fantastical' names of the Chinese. While Du Halde suggests that one may discover the 'fantasticalness' in the rich variety of names and explains that the names often carry 'a good Meaning', Percy affirms that the names of the Chinese are merely 'unmeaning and improper'.

In some other instances, Percy does not readily examine what can be observed in the context of the plot. For example, in the episode where the newly-wed Kwo-khé-tzu and Ghiang-koo are about to rest on their wedding night, Percy provides in his notes a paragraph from the original manuscript that he chose not to include in his edition of the text due to its 'ridiculous[ness]'. This paragraph depicts the husband's words and actions as he gets into bed and approaches his wife: 'Kwo-khé-tzu then stretching out his hands to find his way to bed, said, "Ah! She is asleep: I will pull off my cloaths and go to sleep too' (vol. I, p. 116). The English translation here does not do justice to the Chinese original, which is not presented as a speech, and is not as exaggerated and amusing as it appears to be in the English text.[42] However, since Percy would not have been able to read the Chinese version of the novel, we may analyse this note as it is. In this note, Percy points out that

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[41] Du Halde, *A Description of the Empire of China*, vol. 2, p. 221. This reference is provided by Percy in his note in *Hau Kiou Choaan*, vol. I, p. 72.

> [this paragraph] did not so much proceed from simplicity in the Author, as from an affectation of modesty. The Chinese are a very affected people, and all affectation leads to absurdity. (vol. I, p. 116)

Percy does not give any references in this note. If one situates this episode in the context of the development of the story, the amusement of Kwo-khé-tzu's words can then be easily explained. Earlier in the novel, the reader is informed that Kwo-khé-tzu believes that he is going to marry the beautiful heroine, Shuey-ping-sin; however, the heroine wittily saves herself from a marriage forced by her uncle, and also manages to persuade her uncle to marry his own ugly daughter (Ghiang-koo) to Kwo-khé-tzu instead. Therefore, the amusing account of Kwo-khé-tzu's words and conduct in this episode is ironically charged, and it prepares the reader for his shocking discovery of the real bride the next morning.[43] In his note, Percy does not attribute the seeming absurdity of this episode to the Chinese author of the novel, but chooses to define the character of the Chinese people straightaway from what he wilfully believes to be ample evidence.

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[42] Mingjiaozhongren (author), original Chinese version of *Hau Kiou Choaan* (《好逑传》) (Beijing: Huaxia Publishing House, 2014), p. 206.

Similarly, at the point when the hero, Tieh-chung-u, refuses to accept the suggestion of Shuey-ping-sin's uncle that he should marry her, Percy states in his footnote to this incident that 'where the women in general are held *so cheap*, we must not wonder that the men should be so backward to acknowledge a soft and respectful passion for any one of them' (vol. II, p. 129). Percy's footnote here is heavily misleading, which may be the result of his lack of understanding of the social and cultural realities of Chinese feudal society. Tieh-chung-u's refusal to marry the woman he admires at her uncle's suggestion should not be treated as a 'backward' action. In the context of the novel, Shuey-ping-sin has previously brought the poisoned Tieh-chung-u back to her own house to be looked after – an action in breach of restrictions to male-female relationships in feudal China. As a result, Tieh-chung-u has to protect the reputation of the heroine and manifest vigilance towards social conventions: he fears that marrying the heroine at this point will lead to 'the loss of their good fame' (vol. III, p. 170). In this footnote, Percy also asks the reader to 'bear the above remarks [about the 'cheapness' of Chinese women] in mind throughout this and some of the following chapters'. This note is particularly provocative as it attempts to influence the reader's understanding of the text through deliberate instruction (vol. II, p. 129).

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[43] Kwo-khé-tzu is portrayed as an idle and vulgar young man from a wealthy family; he plots with the heroine's uncle in attempts to force the heroine to marry him.

Hau Kiou Choaan is a novel that highlights the heroine's extraordinary courage and perseverance to follow her own heart in love and marriage against patriarchal forces. The focus of this work is to exalt Shuey-ping-sin's struggle to hold onto her rights both at home and in society. Shuey-ping-sin's exceptional intelligence and bravery are esteemed by most of the novel's male characters. For example, Che-bien, a local official who has once tried to find faults with the heroine, but later becomes impressed with her wisdom and courage, speaks to Kwo-khé-tzu: 'you must not consider her [Shuey-ping-sin] [...] as a young woman of the ordinary stamp. Although she is very young, she hath uncommon abilities' (vol. III, pp. 2-3). The English translation here does not do full justice to the extent of Che-bien's praise of the heroine; in the original Chinese version of the novel, Che-bien describes Shuey-ping-sin as a young lady with 'the wisdom and bearing of a historic hero'.[44] When Kwo-khé-tzu has secured an 'order of marriage' between him and Shuey-ping-sin from a local official through some underhand contrivance, the heroine goes to the court to redress her grievances. Her honest and forceful petition convinces the judge of the injustice she faces and saves her from marrying Kwo-khé-tzu against her will. Court appeal for women was not common in eighteenth-century China, and in some geographical regions it was considered a disgrace that women should appear in person at court. On the one hand, the Chinese author of this novel idealises the condition of women's rights in society of the period; on the other hand, the author's consciousness of women's social limits in real life generates their characters' aspiration to individual and political freedom.[45]

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[44] This is my own translation of the Chinese lines from the original text: '他虽是一个小女子，却有千古大英雄的智量' (Chinese version of *Hau Kiou Choaan* (《好逑传》), p. 267).

Moreover, when asked to give consent to Kwo-khé-tzu's offer of marriage to his daughter, Shuey-ping-sin's father gives his sole priority to the heroine's own inclinations, and declines the offer of marriage as well as an offer that Kwo-khé-tzu's father would help release him from exile should their children get married (vol. III, p. 123). Furthermore, after the hero and the heroine are married, the heroine's views and ideas are always taken into consideration in family gatherings at her husband's household.[46] Indeed, Kwo-khé-tzu's fervent pursuit of Shuey-ping-sin is partially brought about by his attraction to her uncommon abilities as a young woman. For instance, after the heroine's uncle tells Kwo-khé-tzu about the witty measures Shuey-ping-sin has undertaken to avoid marrying him, Kwo-khé-tzu tells her uncle:

> When first I saw [Shuey-ping-sin], I fell in love with her for her beauty, but now were she more ugly than Ghiang-koo, I should admire her no less for her ingenuity and wit. I am distracted to obtain her: you must still contrive some way to oblige me. (vol. I, pp. 160-162)

Essentially, despite occasions in this novel where Shuey-guwin (the heroine's uncle) and Kwo-khé-tzu selfishly dismiss the heroine's true feelings and attempt to force marriage on her, *Hau Kiou Choaan* is a typical text within the Chinese novelistic genre of the 'gifted scholars and talented ladies', which usually portrays and exalts women's pursuit of liberty and independence against social and cultural oppressions.[47] When Shuey-ping-sin is introduced to the reader at the opening of the novel, she is described as 'distinguished for the rare endowments of her mind, and greatness of her capacity, in which she equalled the most eminent of the opposite sex' (vol. I, p. 70). Shuey-guwin and Kwo-khé-tzu's loss against the heroine in a series of contests of wit can be seen as the novel's satire of patriarchal presumption. Percy's note reminds the reader to keep in mind his remark on the lowly position of Chinese women through the novel's portrayal of the heroine; this view will prove increasingly incoherent to the theme and focus of the novel itself.

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[45] The original Chinese version of *Hau Kiou Choaan* was by Mingjiaozhongren, which is a pseudonym meaning 'a person from the school of Confucian ethics' ("名教中人").

[46] For example, even after the heroine's marriage to the hero, Kwo-khé-tzu continues to make troubles for the wedded couple. The heroine is invited to join the family meeting in her husband's household and discuss measures to defend against Kwo-khé-tzu's false accusations (vol. IV, p. 107).

[47] The type of Chinese novel that *Hau Kiou Choaan* belongs to is called 'gifted scholars and talented

Various British artists and writers of the eighteenth century represented British women as fortunate and free by comparison with women in Catholic continental countries and in the East. Men paid tribute to women's talents through their works. For example, Richard Samuel's *The Nine Living Muses of Great Britain* (painting, 1779) portrays a group of renowned contemporary women, each of whom excelled in her chosen artistic field (Elizabeth Carter, Anna Letitia Barbauld, Angelika Kauffmann, Elizabeth Linley, Catharine Macaulay, Elizabeth Montagu, Elizabeth Griffith, Hannah More, and Charlotte Lennox).[48] Their portrait is seen by Elizabeth Eger as a celebration of 'the relationship between the arts along the lines of the classical model of a *harmonious society*', and as a representation of 'the moment when English women as a group first gained acceptance as important contributors to the artistic world'.[49] David

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ladies', as translated literally from Chinese to English. This kind of novel emerged in the Chinese Qing Dynasty (1636-1912) and is often seen as a representative form of novel for this dynasty by literary critics from later periods. This type of novel often involves romance and exalts the hero and the heroine's uncommon wisdom and abilities against predominant feudal conventions.

[48] Elizabeth Eger, 'Representing Culture: *The Nine Living Muses*', *Women, Writing and the Public Sphere*, *1700-1830*, ed. E. Eger [et al.] (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 107.

[49] Ibid., Italics added.

Hume extols the influence of women in promoting civilised behaviour, by commenting that 'the Delicacy of [the female] Sex puts every one on his Guard, lest he give Offence by any Breach of Decency'.[50] John Millar in *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks* (1779) suggests that women's condition is a reflection of civilised progress:

> [the condition of women] is naturally improved by every circumstance which tends to create more attention to the pleasures of sex, and increase the value of those occupations that are suited to the female character; by the cultivation of the arts of life; by the advancement of opulence, and by the gradual refinement of taste and manners.[51]

In *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Percy's description of Chinese women's position as 'so cheap' clearly reflects his view of the supposedly superior condition of women in his own culture.[52] But this Chinese work displays mentalities similar to some English novels of the period, which depict individuals struggling to maintain the integrity of the self in a restrictive society. It is this kind of cross-cultural identification with the sentiments of the characters that highlights *Hau Kiou Choaan*'s universal appeal.

The kind of caution and restriction manifested in the courtship of Shuey-ping-sin and Tieh-chung-u is not altogether unfamiliar in the context of relationships between men and women in eighteenth-century British society. Although some British women in the eighteenth century enjoyed a certain amount of liberty, such as learning and unprecedented access to books, they were still heavily constrained by conventional expectations of female modesty.[53] In Eliza Haywood's *Love in Excess* (1719-1720), while the upper-class heiress, Alovisa, claims to be under no superior authority (due to the death of her father) and therefore free from 'the censures of the world', she nonetheless struggles between passion and her sense of honour, when she thinks of offering her love to Count D'elmont.[54] Moreover, when D'elmont finds his true love in Melliora, he also becomes vigilant in protecting the reputation and honour of his beloved, just like the Chinese hero of *Hau Kiou Choaan*. In *Hau Kiou Choaan*, the upper-class Chinese heroine, who is given a superior education by her father, reflects upon the constraint of being an unmarried woman as she speaks of her inabilities truly to make friends with Tieh-chung-u (whose integrity and courage she greatly admires) on account of gender boundaries: 'O that I was but a man, that I might go along with him and make him my friend! […] But alas! I am a woman, and custom forbids any such thing' (vol. II, pp. 11-12).[55]

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[50] David Hume, 'Of the Rise and Progress of the Arts and Sciences', *Essays, Moral and Political* (vol. II) (Edinburgh: A. Kincaid, 1742), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/>, p. 93.

[51] John Millar, *The Origin of the Distinction of Ranks* (London, 1779), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/>, p. 69.

[52] Here Percy focuses on the status of women in society. Eighteenth-century Britain was notable for a developing sense that women's position in society reflected on the state of society more broadly and that a civilised society treated women well.

Percy's heavy editorial injunction throughout the novel obstructs the reader's sympathy with the novel's main characters, especially the heroine, Shuey-ping-sin. Women's rebellion against society's conventional expectations of them is not an unfamiliar theme for British readers at this point. A number of well-known English novels published in the first half of the eighteenth century, such as Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722), and Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa* (1748), demonstrate a similar preoccupation with women's place in society as that of *Hau Kiou Choaan*. Like Shuey-ping-sin, the heroines of *Pamela* and *Clarissa* find themselves forced to please men (or marry them) against their wishes, owing to society's conventional take on filial duty, gender and class.[56] These heroines endeavour to defend their virtue as well as the right to control their own will. Despite *Pamela*'s controversial reception in the eighteenth century, namely, the debate between Pamelists (who admire the heroine's defence of virtue against unjust forces, especially her master's licentious advances) and Anti-Pamelists (who take the heroine's protection of virtue as artificial and insincere), the subtitle of this novel – 'Virtue Rewarded' – indicates that the author intends to construct his heroine in a positive light. The fact that at least one major group of readers of the period consisted of Pamelists suggests that eighteenth-century British readers were ready to pay tribute to women's resistance to unequal treatment. In this light, Percy's indication that Chinese women are incapable of winning high esteem becomes questionable. While Percy clearly reads *Hau Kiou Choaan* from within his own eighteenth-century cultural context, he does not seem to identify similarities between circumstances in this novel and those in his own culture, and therefore cannot draw connections between Britain and China. Even though Percy's focus on the exploration of Chinese culture is based upon real (rather than abstract) circumstances that are comparable to the lives of his own people, his fundamental attitude towards China is not very different from that held by most of his contemporaries, which is driven by negligence and, at times, evasion of this specific culture.

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[53] The amount of liberty enjoyed by British women of the period is discussed by Amanda Vickery, *The Gentleman's Daughter: Women's Lives in Georgian England* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998), p. 259.

[54] Eliza Haywood, *Love in Excess*, ed. David Oakleaf (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2000), p. 62.

[55] At one point in the novel, the heroine's uncle (Shuey-guwin) speaks about the many books his niece has read with her father since when she was a child: 'When she was a child […] she would be always with her father poring over his books' (vol. I, pp. 152-153).

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[56] James Watt suggests that readers of *Hau Kiou Choaan* might relate the heroine's 'resourcefulness in the face of adversity' to Richardson's heroines. Watt, 'Thomas Percy, China, and the Gothic', p. 97.

James Watt observes that a large number of Percy's notes 'offer digressive observations that seek to typify the national character [of the Chinese], often without any appeal to substantiating authorities'.[57] This observation can be further verified by looking at how some other writers on China make use of source materials. Du Halde's work is also consulted and referenced by Goldsmith in *The Citizen of the World*; however, the way Goldsmith uses this material demonstrates a more willing and faithful engagement with the sources. For example, in both Letter LLXXXII and Letter XCV in *The Citizen of the World*, Goldsmith provides references to Du Halde's texts on Chinese philosophical maxims in his footnotes in order to illustrate better the philosophical messages carried in these letters. Interestingly, Watt argues that Percy 'often sought to undermine what he referred to as the "boasted purity" of Chinese ethical maxims.'[58] While Goldsmith makes an effort to appeal to the value of Chinese ethical and philosophical beliefs, Percy seems to be more inclined to promote his own guidebook on China.[59]

In 'Letter on Du Halde's History of China' (1738), Samuel Johnson observes that Du Halde's work can make the British reader notice similarities between the

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[57] Watt, 'Thomas Percy, China, and the Gothic', p. 97. This view can also be supported by textual analysis between p. 171 and p. 177 of this thesis.

[58] Ibid., p. 98.

[59] In so far as cultural encounter is being used in *Hau Kiou Choaan* to explore values close to home (i.e. Britain), it might be argued that this work is not a book about China at all. However, in some fundamental ways – such as the setting of the work in the context of China, introduction of detailed Chinese traditions and customs, and the author's consultation of other studies of China – this work is certainly a book about China.

Chinese and the British. Johnson proposes that:

> An attentive reader […] will find a calm, peaceful satisfaction, when he reads the moral precepts, and wise instructions of the Chinese sages; he will find that virtue is in every place the same […] he will enjoy all the pleasure that novelty can afford, when he becomes acquainted with the Chinese government and constitution; he will be amazed to find that there is a country where nobility and knowledge are the same, where men advance in rank as they advance in learning, and promotion is the effect of virtuous industry […] He will read of emperors, who […] have neither stored, nor threatened, nor kicked their ministers […] but have, with a greatness of mind worthy of a *Chinese* monarch, brought their actions willingly to the test of reason, law, and morality.[60]

Johnson's comments on the Chinese emperors, in particular, portray a different account from traditional images of eastern despots that were common in eighteenth-century oriental tales. Essentially, Percy, Goldsmith, and Johnson all tried to depict China authentically in order to counteract various fanciful illusions about it. However, while Johnson and Goldsmith seek to find common ground between British and Chinese culture, Percy is inclined to interpret China as both different and inferior. The authors' disparate responses to and use of the same text (i.e. Du Halde's *A Description of the Empire of China*) also demonstrate how source materials can be shaped and manipulated to accommodate the writers' own authorial intentions.[61]

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[60] Samuel Johnson, 'Letter on Du Halde's History of China' (1738), in *The Works of Samuel Johnson* [vol. 14] (John Stockdale, G. G. J. and J. Robinson, 1788), pp. 552-556.

[61] *Hau Kiou Choaan* was read to a small group of people before it was published, and Johnson was among this group. Alda Milner-Barry, 'A Note on the Early Literary Relations of Oliver Goldsmith and Thomas Percy', *Review of English Studies*, 2/5 (1926), 51-61, at p. 52.

While some of Percy's friends saw more merit in the notes than in the main text of the novel, *Hau Kiou Choaan* did not seem to enjoy more success on account of them. William Shenstone wrote to Percy after reading an advance copy of the novel, that 'Your Annotations have great merit' (Sep. 1761), yet he was uncertain about the novel's success in the market.[62] It turned out that the novel was a commercial failure, and a re-issue – which was prepared in 1774 – was never published.[63] Percy's publisher, Robert Dodsley, wrote in a letter to Shenstone that he would 'never own' *Hau Kiou Choaan*, despite the fact that Dodsley was initially positive of the novel's ability to 'excite curiosity' before its publication.[64] The *Critical Review* dismissed the novel as 'the most unpleasing performance which we have perused for some months past'.[65] The lack of success for this novel might have been due to the content of the original Chinese plot, or Percy's heavy editorial intervention, or both.[66]

However, credit needs to be given to Percy's indefatigable industry in his research for this work. Despite Percy's subjective comments, many of the notes adequately introduce knowledge about China in a wide range of areas, such as its government, customs and beliefs. For example, in the episode where Kwo-khé-tzu plots with Shuey-guwin on forcing the heroine to marry him, Kwo-khé-tzu tells that 'I shall soon be able to plague her; for in a short time there will come a Ngan-yuen or Grand Visitor into this province, who was a pupil of my father's. Him will I get to oblige her to marry me' (VII, p. 221). In Percy's footnote to this text, he explains that – in the Chinese political system – the office of a Ngan-yuen is 'very formidable'. Percy goes on to describe the role of a Ngan-yuen in great detail: while the main text takes up 3 lines of the page, Percy's footnote occupies 20 lines on the same page. This footnote states that '[the Ngan-yuen] takes cognizance of all causes criminal and civil; of the militia, revenue, &c. He visits, inquires and informs himself of every thing. He receives the accusations of the people against all their governors' (vol. II, p. 221). To stress the fairness of the political system, Percy observes that 'there are often private Inspectors, or Spies, sent into the provinces to observe the conduct of the Mandarines, and to report them accordingly' (vol. II, p. 221). Yet the footnote is not purely factual, as Percy then criticises the weaknesses of Chinese government by suggesting a gap between its theory and practice:

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[62] Shenstone wrote to Percy that he could 'form no Conjecture, what vogue [this novel] will obtain', *The Correspondence of Thomas Percy and William Shenstone*, ed. Cleanth Brooks (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 114.

[63] Fan, 'Percy's *Hau Kiou Choaan*', p. 117; Watt, 'Percy, China, and the Gothic', p. 101. Kitson notes that despite its commercial failure, *Hau Kiou Choaan* was an influential text of the period, for it was soon translated into French, German and Dutch in the late 1760s (Kitson, 'Thomas Percy', p. 34).

[64] Hans Hecht. (ed.), *Thomas Percy und William Shenstone* (Quellen und Forschungen, Bd. 103, 1909), p. 41. Cited in Powell, 'Hau Kiou Choaan', p. 446.

[65] Nick Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques* (Oxford, 1999), p. 211; *Critical Review* (Nov. 1761), quoted in Bertram H. Davis, *Thomas Percy: A Scholar-Cleric in the Age of Johnson* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), p. 90.

[66] One may argue that the sentiments and the plotline of this original Chinese novel are comparable – and even sometimes very similar – to a range of British novels that were published in the same period, and *Hau Kiou Choaan* might have appeared to be less exotic and 'distinctive', and thus fallen below some British readers' expectations of what an eastern fiction should look like (e.g. characterized by fantasy and wishful thinking). See pp. 178-181 of this thesis for more discussion on this idea.

> It is easy to conceive what excellent purposes these institutions might answer; but these good ends are too often defeated by the corruption and avarice of the officers, who are seldom found proof against bribes and presents, notwithstanding the risk they run in taking them. (vol. II, p. 221)

This observation shows that while the system of provincial government in China is designed to work against injustice, it is often faulty in practice. This claim can be supported by textual evidence in the novel. For example, Kwo-khé-tzu repeatedly plots with provincial officials in his pursuit of the heroine; Tah-quay, a wealthy and powerful village officer, carries away Wey-siang-coon's fiancée by force because he wants to marry the woman himself (Vol. I, Chapters 1-2); Kwo-khé-tzu's father secretly takes revenge on the heroine's father at court because the latter refuses to marry his daughter to Kwo-khé-tzu (vol. III, p. 126).

Percy cites Du Halde's *A Description of the Empire of China* as a reference to this footnote (vol. II, p. 221). It describes in detail the 'general Review of all the Mandarins of the Empire [of China]'. While Du Halde's source also suggests possible corruption of the officers, it shows how the Chinese government works to prevent it as well: 'As the General Officers might be corrupted with Bribes […] the Emperor from time to time sends Inspectors secretly into the Provinces […] And if by these secret Informations, they discover any thing irregular in his Conduct, they presently unveil the Ensigns of their Dignity, and declare themselves the Emperor's Envoys.'[67] By reading Percy's and Du Halde's notes side by side, it becomes apparent that Percy only covers part of the full practice of the Chinese government. Despite some detailed and accurate introduction of the system of government in China, Percy's description here ends on a negative note. One can argue that while Percy claims that his note is drawn from Du Halde's work, he is selective in the process of referencing, and the materials he selects seem to be constructed to meet his own views of the topic. Indeed, the textual examples identified above in relation to the corruption of the officers have all been rectified as events of the novel unfold: the heroine redresses her grievances at court and is protected from a forced marriage (vol. II, chapter X); Tieh-chung-u and his father have saved Wey-siang-coon's fiancée from the hands of Tah-quay through presenting an official memorandum to the emperor (vol. I, chapter I – IV), and they have also saved the heroine's father from injustice in the same way (vol. III, chapter VIII).[68]

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[67] Du Halde, *A Description of the Empire of China*, vol. 1, p. 258.

In his footnotes, Percy also introduces various aspects of Chinese people's material life, such as the production of porcelain and pottery, the consumption of tea and herbs, and the family life. For instance, Percy writes a lengthy article – in his footnote – across eight pages on Chinese earthenware in the second volume of the novel. As with the previous example of Percy's footnote on Chinese government, while on each of these pages the main text occupies only a couple of lines, the footnotes take up around thirty lines (and in smaller and more compact typeface) per page.[69] In this eight-page footnote, Percy describes the location – King-te-ching – where Chinese porcelain (called 'Tse-ki' in Chinese) is originally produced. He then introduces the 'three principal ingredients' of porcelain: 'a dry Earth, a moist Clay, and a stony Oil', and expands upon each ingredient in detail in three separate paragraphs. This is followed by an introduction of the manufacturing process of porcelain and the importation of chinaware into Europe. Percy at once emphasises the great value of the best of the Chinese porcelains and notes that the Chinese are also 'as curious in *European* glasses and crystals, &c. as [the Europeans] are in china-ware' (vol. II, pp. 203-210).[70] By concluding this footnote with the suggestion of China and Europe's mutual interest in their manufactures, Percy seems to have created an exchange of interests between these two cultures. However, in the context of the plot, this lengthy footnote – though accurate in its factual details – appears detached from the meaning of the text. In this episode, the heroine's uncle tries to convince her that the hero is not a gentleman after hearing of false rumours that he abducted a woman. Shuey-guwin here compares Tieh-chung-u to a 'pitcher' as he believes that Tieh-chung-u only pretends to be virtuous: 'The pitcher goes often up and down the well, but is broken at last' (vol. II, p. 203). To her uncle's dismay, the heroine rightly insists on Tieh-chung-u's innocence. As a result, Percy's footnote on Chinese earthenware is developed from Shuey-guwin's use of a metaphor (broken pitcher), and the large amount of factual details about earthenware in its sense does not appear congruent with the characters' exchanges in the text.

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[68] Chen discusses Percy's perception of the corruption of the Chinese government through analysing a few different footnotes in *Hau Kiou Choaan* from the one I have discussed. Chen argues that despite discussions of the corrupt practices among Mandarins in China carried out by Percy's contemporaries, such as Captain Anson and the compiler of *Modern Universal History* (vol. 8), Percy is unsatisfied with the degree to which these authors criticise such corruption: 'The one regarding only the visible corruption of the *Chinese*, hath conceived a mean opinion of their Laws […] the other reflecting on the excellency of their Laws, hath supposed this corruption only partial and of late standing' (vol. II, p. 168). Chen, 'Thomas Percy and His Chinese Studies', p. 318.

[69] A sample page (vol. II, p. 204) is included in the appendices of this thesis.

This want of congruence is not coincidental in Percy's editing process. One of his most notable interventions to the original text is the insertion of 'a Collection of Chinese Proverbs and Apothegms' at the end of the novel's third volume, thus interrupting the fluidity of the main text (vol. III, pp. 185-259).[71] In the Advertisement from this collection, Percy explains his intention of producing the proverbs and apothegms by claiming that 'No truer judgment can be formed of the temper and genius of any nation, than from their common Proverbs' (vol. III, p. 183). For this reason, Percy seeks to justify his insertion of this collection in the middle of *Hau Kiou Choaan* by observing that 'the following COLLECTION would be no improper Supplement to a book, which professes to give a picture of the CHINESE, as drawn by themselves' (vol. III, p. 183). One can argue that the main text of *Hau Kiou Choaan* almost fades into the background in the face of Percy's notes and additions to the text. By intervening in the meanings of the original Chinese text, Percy has gone beyond his self-proclaimed role of an editor. While an editor is supposed to help the reader better understand the messages from the text, Percy focuses on communicating his own views and preferences with regard to China. It was not the twenty-six books about China (and many of them are produced in multiple volumes) read by Percy that generated problems and provoked controversy, it was the way Percy chose to use them and base his own argument upon them.

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[70] In this footnote, Percy rightly points out that the Chinese mirrors were originally made of polished steel. Glass mirrors were introduced to China by European missionaries in the eighteenth century.

[71] The novel consists of 4 volumes.

Percy's other work on China, *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese*, was published in 1762. It consists of eight independent pieces, and one of them was written by Percy himself; the others are mostly written by Jesuit missionaries.[72] Apart from Percy's own essay, most of the other works in this collection had been previously published in Europe.[73] The subject matter of these works range from the Chinese language to Chinese drama, and from religion to garden designs.[74] Although Percy does not insert footnotes in *Miscellaneous Pieces* as he does in *Hau Kiou Choaan*, his preface and his own essay in this collection – 'A Dissertation on the Language of the Chinese' – share a similar tone to the footnotes in *Hau Kiou Choaan*. For example, in the Preface, Percy claims Chinese gardening and its moral philosophies to be 'deserv[ing] respect', despite, in his mind, the fact that the 'judgement and fancy' of the Chinese have 'in many instances been held in low esteem' (Preface, n. p.). Percy's seeming respect for the merit of these two aspects of Chinese culture is articulated by his dismissal of so much else. Percy then observes that the reader will find in *Miscellaneous Pieces* a striking display' of the Chinese taste in gardening, and a 'curious specimen' of Chinese moral truths (Preface). The phrasing here sounds slightly peculiar, and does not seem to convey much sense of admiration. The use of 'curious specimen' resonates with Percy's use of the same phrasing in the Preface of *Hau Kiou Choaan*, as he calls the text 'a curious specimen of Chinese literature' (vol. I, p. xiv). According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, 'curious' carries an obsolete meaning of 'made with care or art; skilfully, elaborately or beautifully wrought'. This definition is supported by eighteenth-century entries. However, in the context of Percy's general views of Chinese culture, and in particular when he describes *Hau Kiou Choaan* as 'not as a piece to be admired for the beauties of its composition, but as a curious specimen of Chinese literature' (vol. I, p. xiv), it is not very likely that Percy uses 'curious' in the sense of being refined and beautiful.

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[72] Thomas Percy (ed.), *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese* (London: R. and J. Dodsley, 1762), *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, last accessed 30 September 2018, <http://find.galegroup.com/ecco/>. All subsequent references to this work will appear in-text.

[73] David Porter, 'Thomas Percy's sinology and the origins of English romanticism', *The Chinese Taste in Eighteenth-Century England*, p. 156.

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[74] The first work in this collection is Percy's own essay, 'A Dissertation on the Language of the Chinese' (1). Other works are (2) 'Rules of Conduct by a Chinese Author', a letter from P. Parrennim, a Jesuit missionary, to P. Du Halde of the same society; (3) *The Little Orphan of the House of Chao*; (4) 'On the Chinese Drama', from Mr. Hurd's Discourse on Poetical Imitation; (5) 'Authentic Memoirs of the Chinese Church in China', from the German of J. L. de Mosheim; (6) 'Of the art of laying out Gardens among the Chinese by Chambers' from *Designs of Chinese Buildings* (London: 1757); (7) 'A Description of the Emperor of China's Gardens and Pleasure-Houses near Peking', a letter from Frere Attiret (Jesuit and painter to the Emperor of China) to Monsteur d' Assaut; (8) 'A Description of the Solemnities Observed at Peking', a letter from P. Amyot, a Jesuit missionary, to P. Altart of the same society. All titles are taken from the content pages in *Miscellaneous Pieces*.

The title page of *Miscellaneous Pieces* includes four Chinese characters – '物格知至' – and they are inscribed in large font sizes right at the centre of the page.[75] Beneath these characters, there are phonetic-like letters that help one to pronounce these four Chinese characters ('ve, 'ki', 'chi', 'chi'), as well as four Latin terms translated from the Chinese characters above. 'Confucius' is written beneath the Latin. The four characters above form a Chinese phrase that comes from the core of Confucian philosophies and is based on *The Daxue* (*Great Learning*), one of the Confucian classics. The four Latin terms are 'omnia' (thing), 'explorare' (explore), 'intellectum' (understanding) and 'perficit' (achieve). The original Chinese phrase means that one needs to first explore the essence of things in order to acquire true knowledge. By placing this Confucian phrase in the middle of the title page, Percy seems to be at once alluding to the language theme of his own essay in this collection and endorsing the meanings behind this phrase.

In his discussion of Percy's sinology, David Porter suggests that 'in the course of his Chinese researches, Percy developed strong, even impassioned views about his subject that reveal his framing claims to neutrality to be little more than a pious façade'.[76] Porter's view can be justified with reference to both Percy's notes in *Hau Kiou Choaan* and his discussion of the Chinese language in *Miscellaneous Pieces*. 'A

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[75] A copy of the title page is included in the Appendices of this thesis.

[76] Porter, 'Thomas Percy's sinology', *The Chinese Taste*, p. 159.

Dissertation on the Language of the Chinese' conveys two strands of messages (pp. 3-40). On the one hand, this essay describes in great detail both spoken and written Chinese, especially the lack of affinity between the pronunciation of a character and its written form. On the other hand, Percy emphasises the inferiority of the Chinese language in comparison to languages that are based on an alphabet. Percy casts the complexity of the Chinese language in a negative light by observing that:

> to adopt an alphabet only expressive of [the Chinese people's] oral language, would be at once to divest themselves of their learning, eloquence and knowledge, and to reduce themselves to their primitive ignorance. (p. 11)

And he goes on to criticise the learning of Chinese characters as time-consuming and unwise: the Chinese spend 'the finest and most vigorous part of human life' in learning their language, which leaves them 'no longer leisure nor ability to aim at great improvements' (pp. 12-13). Percy's criticism of the Chinese language reveals his ignorance of the essence of this ancient language. In fact, derived from a hieroglyphic origin, the Chinese characters embody rich cultural meanings that lie beneath their complex forms. The learning of the Chinese language involves a considerable amount of knowledge of its history, arts and philosophy. While often intending to provide details about China that may help articulate its culture, Percy, in his Chinese studies, does not appear to have fulfilled his claim. The 'neutrality' (in Porter's term) of Percy's claim for 'rendering [details of the manners and customs of the Chinese] intelligible' is, as examined in this chapter, frequently proven to be merely a 'pious façade' (Porter's term).[77]

Watt describes Percy's writings about China in the 1760s as 'the *stimuli* that might rejuvenate British literary culture', and depicts *Hau Kiou Choaan* as 'perhaps the first English translation of an oriental narrative to elevate the ideas of a work's "testimonial" value over any sense of the combined instruction and delight that it might afford'.[78] Watt's comment on the work's 'testimonial' value is a positive appraisal, as it shows that the novel is not just about instructing or pleasing the reader, it is about providing appropriate evidence. Although this chapter has proven that in many cases Percy's 'evidence' is either immature or false, yet by taking the novel itself as 'evidence', *Hau Kiou Choaan*, together with *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese,* represents a fresh enquiry into literary orientalism in Britain in the eighteenth century. In addition, the publication of *Hau Kiou Choaan* also provoked interest in the Chinese novel in other parts of Europe. For example, French and German translations from the English were published in 1766, and a Dutch translation appeared in the following year.[79] Chen points out that 'the *Hau Kiou Choaan* has been repeatedly translated into European tongues, partly as a sample of Eastern Asiatic prose fiction, and partly as an able and convenient summary of Chinese national traits.'[80] Perhaps the influence of

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[77] In the preface to *Hau Kiou Choaan*, Percy justifies his heavy footnotes in the text by claiming that 'the manners and customs of the Chinese, their peculiar ways of thinking, and modes of expression are so remote from our own, that they frequently require a large detail to render them intelligible' (pp. xxiv-xxv). See p. 171 of this thesis for a discussion of this quotation in relation to Goldsmith's *The Citizen of the World.*

[78] Watt, 'Percy, China, and the Gothic', p. 95, p. 106. Italics added.

[79] Chen, 'Thomas Percy and His Chinese Studies', p. 304.

[80] Ibid.

Hau Kiou Choaan was as complex as Percy's commission of the work, for the novel's success cannot be judged by its immediate reception or commercial value alone, but also by its lasting influence and even the doubts and curiosities it has generated. Whether Percy's works and views of China provoked louder criticism or higher praise, his input into the studies of China contributed to an increasingly lively debate that would increasingly perceive differences as a source of strength, not weakness.

Conclusion

This study contributes to existing research on Sino-British encounters in the eighteenth century through analysing a diverse range of literary works written about China. Some of these texts were conceived and written by British writers, while others were translated or adapted from original Chinese literature and art. This study shows the significance of reading these materials not simply as documents of a historical kind – a conventional way of reading adopted by most researches on Sino-British relations – but as texts that are worthy of literary and artistic attention on the basis of their rich variety in genre, style, and themes. This task has been carried out by situating the texts in the context of the diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations between China and Britain in the eighteenth century, as well as by paying close attention to their literary characteristics and aesthetic attributes.

The structure of this study corresponds to its intention of establishing dialogues among various works and authors, and of reflecting upon the meaning of China to Britain's cultural and social significance in the eighteenth century. Foreignness generated mixed feelings in the development of Britain's self-identity in this period. The juxtaposition of desire and anxiety in Britain's reception of Chinese culture was the result of a struggle for power between these two empires. The texts discussed in this study – in their various styles and preoccupations – become complex manifestations of complex relationships. Debates on tea-drinking encapsulate eighteenth-century conceptions of gender and domesticity, while also cutting across the border between the public and the private. The literary skirmish between Murphy and Voltaire shows how a Chinese text can provoke reflections on social and political situations across different European cultures. Goldsmith's use of reverse ethnography in his creation of a Chinese observer in Britain investigates the extent of real differences between China and Britain, and proposes an acknowledgement of universality amidst cultural diversity. Percy's editorial interventions while editing an original Chinese novel represent the process of understanding a foreign culture, which is paved with misinterpretations and reinterpretations.

Through discussing the introduction of Chinese culture to Britain in eighteenth-century English literature, this study explores the interplay between foreignness and selfhood by reflecting on what it means to be British and Chinese. The formation of Britain's self-identity is inseparable from the nation's encounters with other cultures, and these intercultural and interconnected forces have become part of the history of Britain. Peter Kitson observes that for many scholars China is crucial to the formation of the modern West, for it is 'at the very heart of the construction of the modern, liberal, and humane European self, as an exemplar, a limit case, or horizon of otherness against which to measure the borders of "human" sympathy'.[1] In Kitson's view, China acts as a critical mirror in which Europe examines and reflects upon its own image. China's distant geographical location from Britain casts it in a mysterious light and provides sufficient room for imagining and reconstructing thoughts and ideas, while its ancient civilisation and rich cultural achievements present it as an appealing counterpart for Britain in a time of global expansion.

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[1] Kitson, *Forging Romantic China*, p. 1, p. 10.

This study seeks to show that empathy is a bridge between studies of different cultures. It is through thinking about why British writers on China do what they do that genuine development of Sino-British relations is able to proceed. For example, the attention paid by British authors to the status of Chinese women is prompted by similar concerns in British society at the time, as the eighteenth century (especially in its second half) represented an important early stage for the development of feminist ideas in Britain. The equivocal attitudes towards the image of Confucius and Confucian thinking in a number of the texts discussed in this study might have been partly owing to the Chinese Rites Controversy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which led to the expulsion of Catholic missionaries from China in 1721.[2] The calls for temperance by critics against tea-drinking in the consumer boom of eighteenth-century Britain were influenced by an emphasis on the practice of reason and restraint in Enlightenment thought.

The formal experiments in English writings on China – which made their appearance in the eighteenth century – would extend into the nineteenth century and beyond. For instance, John Francis Davis, one of the leading sinologists in nineteenth-century Britain, produced a new translation of *Hau Kiou Choaan* – this time directly from Chinese to English – and entitled it *The Fortunate Union* (1839). *The Orphan of China* was still performed on stage at least into the nineteenth century, and Mandane was one of the most admired roles for a heroine for British audiences in this period.[3] In his essay, 'The Subject of Breakfast Continued – Tea-drinking' (1834), Leigh Hunt reduces the substantial amount of knowledge about China available at his time to the blue-and-white willow pattern of the Chinese tea-ware, and thus carries on the debate over Britain's acquisition of Chinese taste.[4] With the establishment of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland in 1824, increasing scholarly exploration of subjects in literature, art and science in relation to Asia was encouraged. The emergence of such a learned society facilitated the process of developing discussions and speculations of Sino-British relations into academic and scholarly studies.

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[2] There was no Protestant missionary to China until the early nineteenth century, and the Chinese Rites Controversy created a general gulf between China and Europe on matters of religion and belief. The Chinese Rites Controversy was a dispute that originated among the Chinese Catholic missionaries about whether Chinese ritual practices, such as the Confucian rites and other formal secular rituals, could be regarded as compatible with Christian rites. As the Jesuit missionaries in China had adopted a policy of accommodation of the Chinese rites, the Pope suppressed the Christians' practice of these rites in 1704, followed by papal decrees of 1715 and 1742. In 1721, the Chinese emperor – who disagreed with the Pope's decree – banned Christian missions in China. Details about the Controversy are taken from Robert Richmond Ellis, *They Need Nothing: Hispanic-Asian Encounters of the Colonial Period* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), p. 69.

This study seeks to inspire further researches on reflections of China in English literature. The development of sinology in the nineteenth century was accompanied by an increased grasp of the Chinese language. A number of British sinologists of the period were able to read the Chinese texts in their original versions – a skill not possessed by eighteenth-century British writers about China. This promoted English translations of the Chinese texts and thus allowed a more accurate understanding of the meanings of these texts for British readers.[5] For example, Herbert Giles translated many classical Chinese texts on ethnic beliefs, such as the

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[3] This was discussed in more detail in Chapter Two of this study.

[4] Leigh Hunt, 'The Subject of Breakfast Continued – Tea-drinking', *London Journal*, 9 (1834), 113-14. Hunt's essay is discussed in more detail in Kitson, *Forging Romantic China*, pp. 180-81.

[5] Before the nineteenth century, most Chinese texts available in Europe were translated by Jesuit missionaries first into other European languages (e.g. French), which were then translated into English.

Analects of Confucius, the *Lau Tzu*, and the *Chuang Tzu*. James Legge published his translation of the *She-King*, the Chinese classic of poetry.[6] Peter France observes that Legge was 'the first English translator of classical Chinese poetry to seek concrete solutions to the perennial problems of balancing the requirements of scholarship and prosody'.[7] France's statement shows that serious literary engagement was developing in studies of China in Britain in the period. Since there was a considerable number of English translations of Chinese classical texts belonging to the bulk of the Confucian canon in the nineteenth century, it would be interesting and worthwhile to explore further the treatment of Confucianism in English literature about China, a subject that this study engaged with in a more general sense.

The Opium Wars of the nineteenth century further complicated the relationship between Britain and China. Beneath Britain's military victory in its struggles for imperial power, the country's history and culture continued to be influenced by its encounters with China. The tension between Britain and China persisted alongside feelings of anxiety and desire, which inadvertently opened up possibilities for various and increasing exchanges in culture.

Through exploring reflections of China in eighteenth-century English literature, this study invites a rethinking of ideas of foreignness and selfhood. The eighteenth-century authors discussed in this study are among the bold thinkers who – in their various ways – have thought to build bridges between the East and the West.

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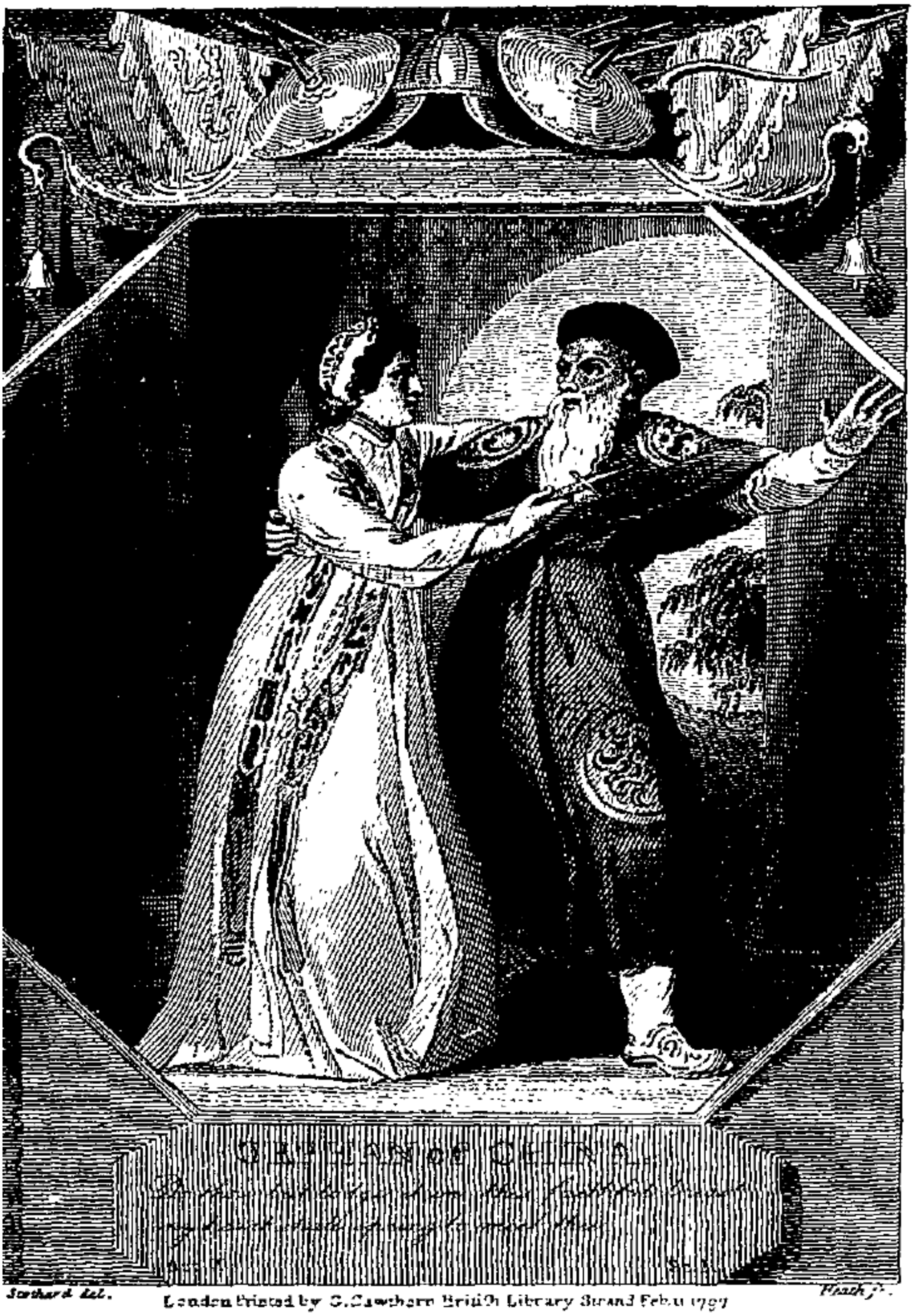
[6] Peter France (ed.), *The Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 222.

[7] Ibid., p. 224.

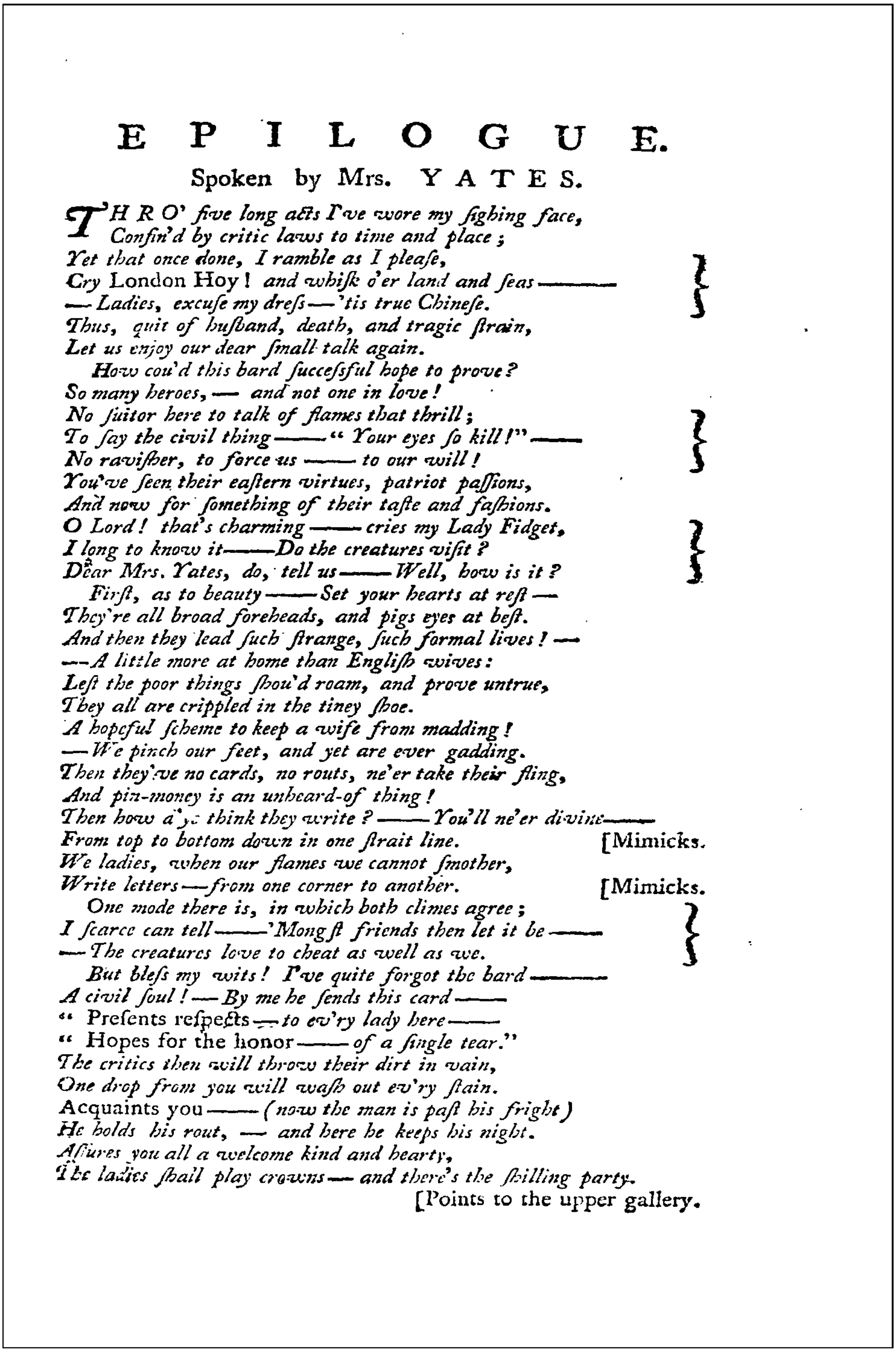
Chinese and British cultures are not antithetical entities; they exist in relation to one another and create possibilities in the continuing appreciation of diversity amidst a drive to universality. The preceding pages represent a small contribution to this task.

Appendices


ORPHAN OF CHINA.
Stothard del.
London Printed by G. Cawthorn British Library Strand Feb.11 1797
Heath sc.

A portrayal of Mandane and Zamti on stage, frontispiece to *The Orphan of China* (1797 edition)

(See footnote 50 in Chapter Two for more details)



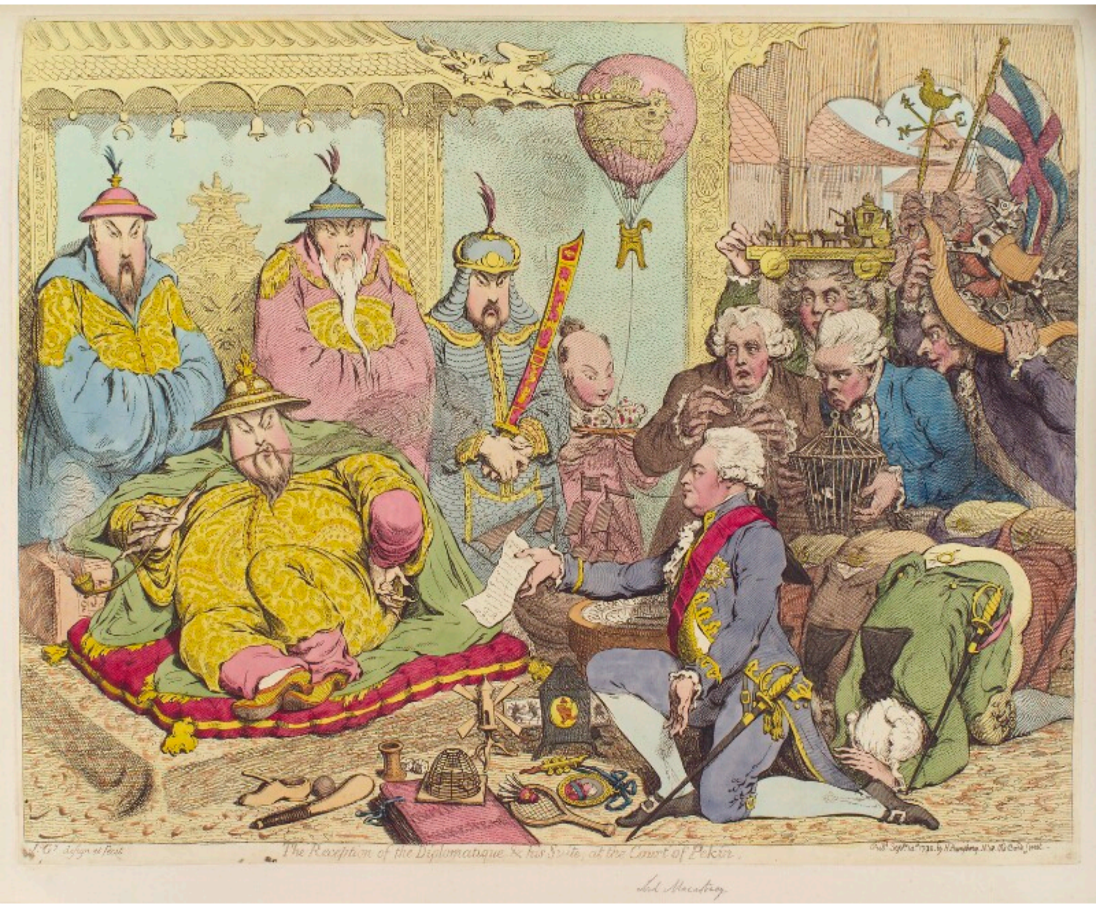
EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. YATES.

THRO' five long acts I've wore my ſighing face,
Confin'd by critic laws to time and place;
Yet that once done, I ramble as I pleaſe,
Cry London Hoy! *and whiſk o'er land and ſeas*——
—Ladies, excuſe my dreſs—'tis true Chineſe.
Thus, quit of huſband, death, and tragic ſtrain,
Let us enjoy our dear ſmall-talk again.
How cou'd this bard ſucceſsful hope to prove?
So many heroes,— and not one in love!
No ſuitor here to talk of flames that thrill;
To ſay the civil thing——"Your eyes ſo kill!"——
No raviſher, to force us —— to our will!
You've ſeen their eaſtern virtues, patriot paſſions,
And now for ſomething of their taſte and faſhions.
O Lord! that's charming——cries my Lady Fidget,
I long to know it——Do the creatures viſit?
Dear Mrs. Yates, do, tell us——Well, how is it?
Firſt, as to beauty——Set your hearts at reſt—
They're all broad foreheads, and pigs eyes at beſt.
And then they lead ſuch ſtrange, ſuch formal lives!—
—A little more at home than Engliſh wives:
Leſt the poor things ſhou'd roam, and prove untrue,
They all are crippled in the tiney ſhoe.
A hopeful ſcheme to keep a wife from madding!
—We pinch our feet, and yet are ever gadding.
Then they've no cards, no routs, ne'er take their fling,
And pin-money is an unheard-of thing!
Then how d'ye think they write?——You'll ne'er divine——
From top to bottom down in one ſtrait line. [Mimicks.
We ladies, when our flames we cannot ſmother,
Write letters—from one corner to another. [Mimicks.
One mode there is, in which both climes agree;
I ſcarce can tell——'Mongſt friends then let it be——
—The creatures love to cheat as well as we.
But bleſs my wits! I've quite forgot the bard——
A civil ſoul!—By me he ſends this card——
" Preſents reſpects—*to ev'ry lady here*——
" Hopes for the honor——*of a ſingle tear.*"
The critics then will throw their dirt in vain,
One drop from you will waſh out ev'ry ſtain.
Acquaints you——*(now the man is paſt his fright)*
He holds his rout,— and here he keeps his night.
Aſſures you all a welcome kind and hearty,
The ladies ſhall play crowns— and there's the ſhilling party.
[Points to the upper gallery.

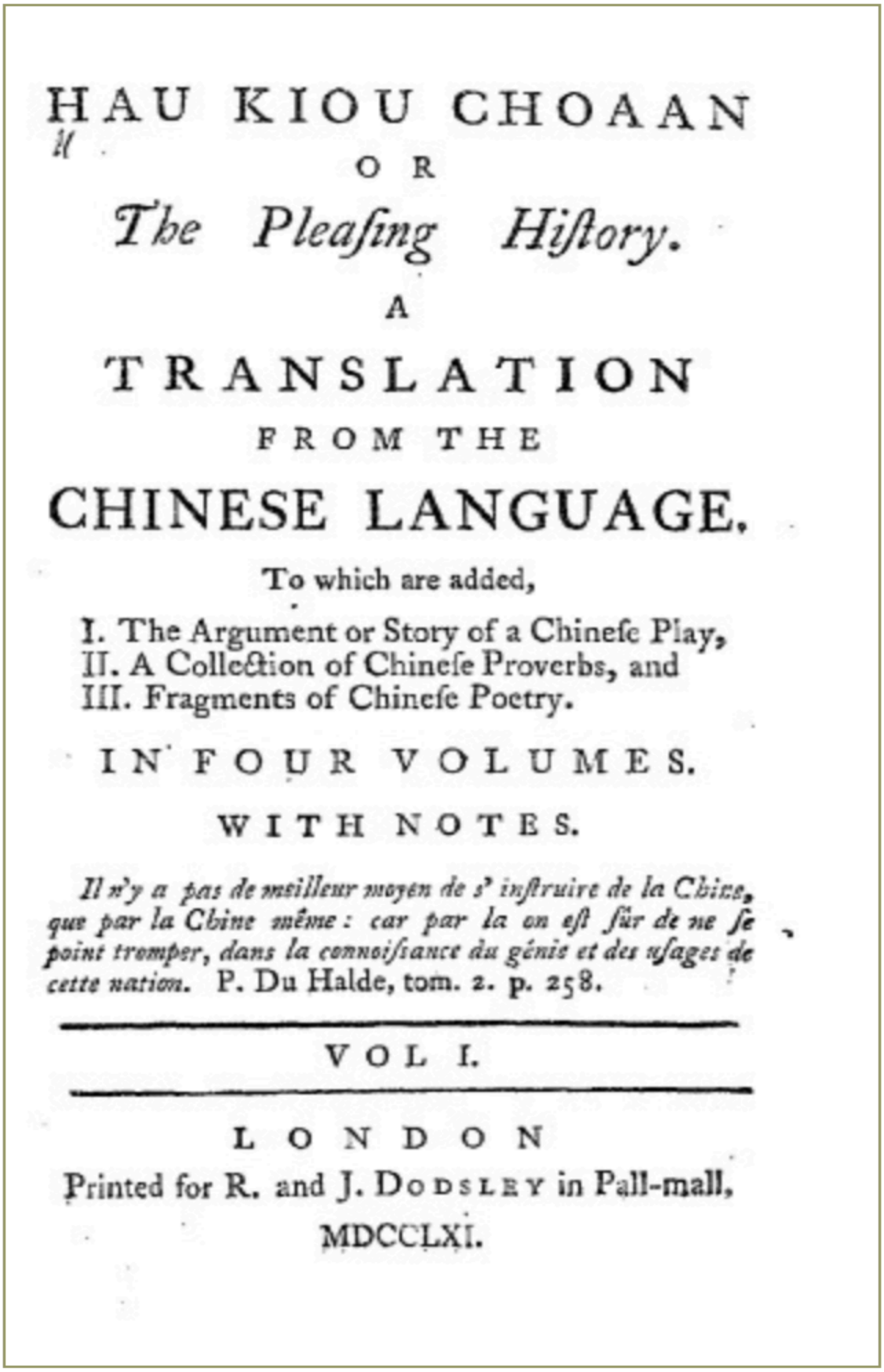
The Epilogue to *The Orphan of China*

(See footnote 59 in Chapter Two for more details)


The Reception of the Diplomatique & his Suite, at the Court of Pekin.
Lord Macartney

James Gillray's satirical painting (etching), *The Reception of the Diplomatique and His Suite at the Court of Pekin* (1792)

(See footnote 60 in Chapter Three for more details)



HAU KIOU CHOAAN
OR
The Pleaſing Hiſtory.
A
TRANSLATION
FROM THE
CHINESE LANGUAGE.
To which are added,
I. The Argument or Story of a Chineſe Play,
II. A Collection of Chineſe Proverbs, and
III. Fragments of Chineſe Poetry.
IN FOUR VOLUMES.
WITH NOTES.

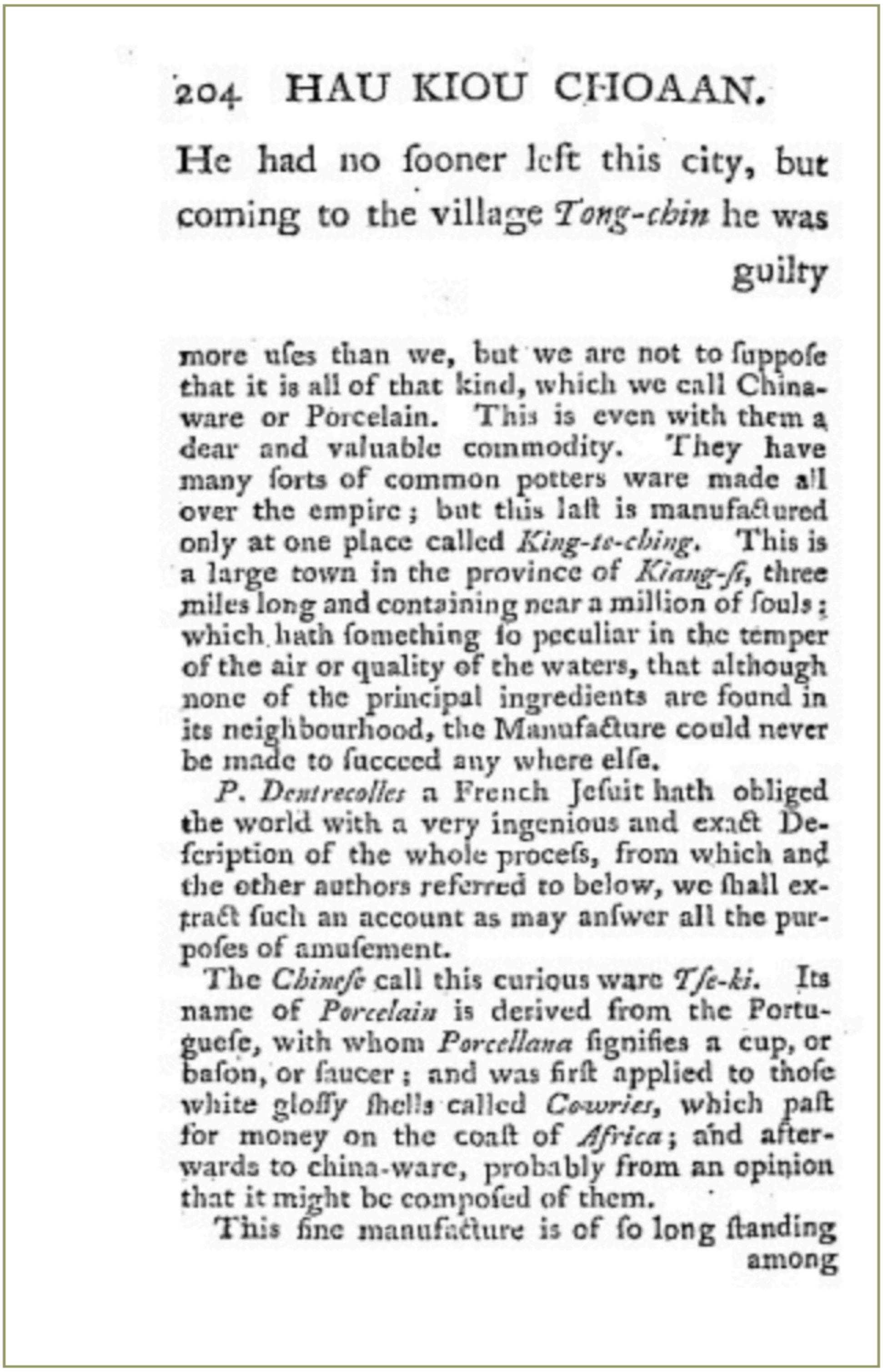
Il n'y a pas de meilleur moyen de s' inſtruire de la Chine, que par la Chine même: car par la on eſt ſûr de ne ſe point tromper, dans la connoiſſance du génie et des uſages de cette nation. P. Du Halde, tom. 2. p. 258.

VOL I.

LONDON
Printed for R. and J. DODSLEY in Pall-mall,
MDCCLXI.

The title page of *Hau Kiou Choaan; or, The Pleasing History*

(See footnote 8 in Chapter Four for more details)



204 HAU KIOU CHOAAN.

He had no ſooner left this city, but coming to the village *Tong-chin* he was

guilty

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more uſes than we, but we are not to ſuppoſe that it is all of that kind, which we call China-ware or Porcelain. This is even with them a dear and valuable commodity. They have many ſorts of common potters ware made all over the empire; but this laſt is manufactured only at one place called *King-te-ching*. This is a large town in the province of *Kiang-ſi*, three miles long and containing near a million of ſouls; which hath ſomething ſo peculiar in the temper of the air or quality of the waters, that although none of the principal ingredients are found in its neighbourhood, the Manufacture could never be made to ſucceed any where elſe.

P. Dentrecolles a French Jeſuit hath obliged the world with a very ingenious and exact Deſcription of the whole proceſs, from which and the other authors referred to below, we ſhall extract ſuch an account as may anſwer all the purpoſes of amuſement.

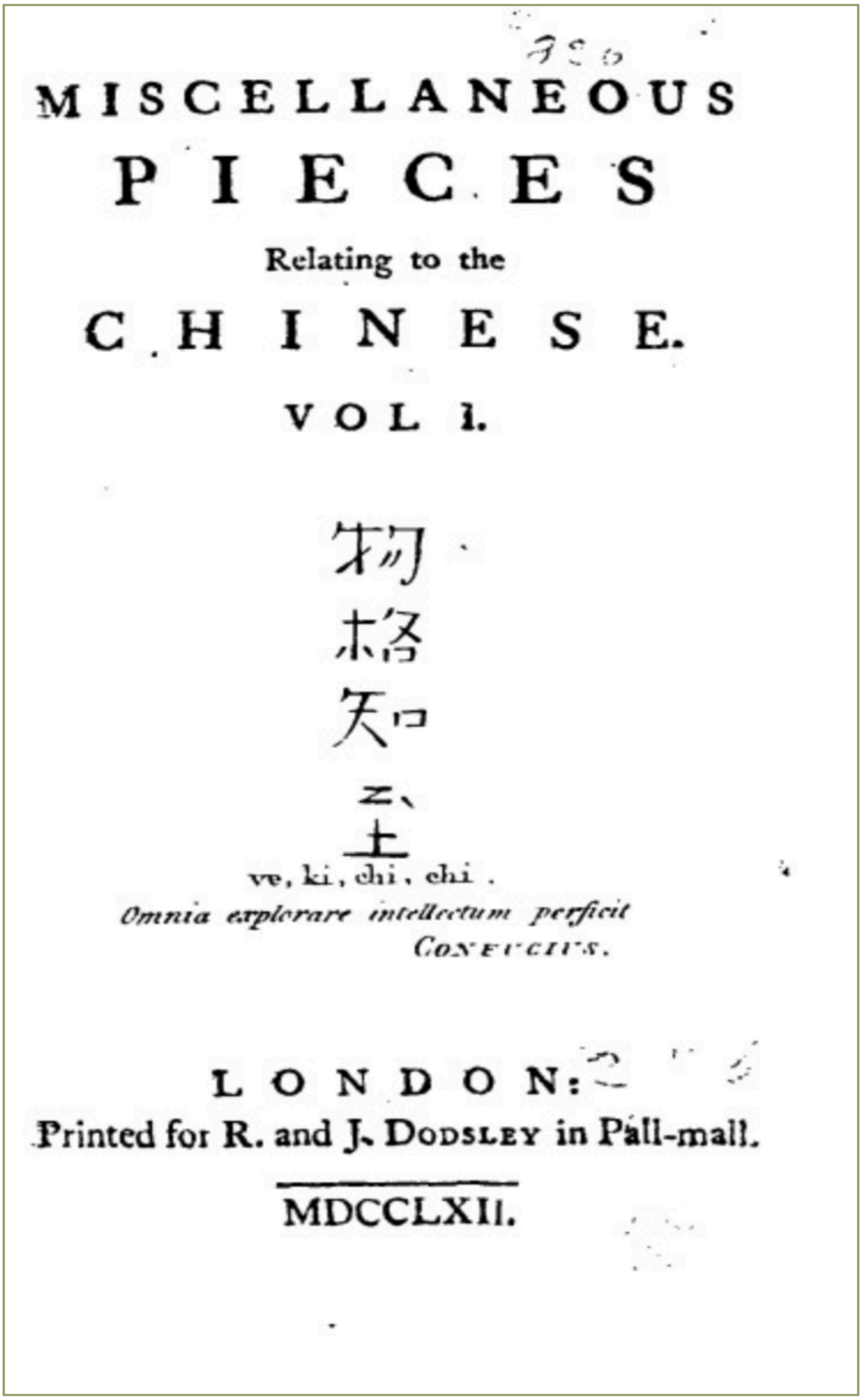
The *Chineſe* call this curious ware *Tſe-ki*. Its name of *Porcelain* is derived from the Portugueſe, with whom *Porcellana* ſignifies a cup, or baſon, or ſaucer; and was firſt applied to thoſe white gloſſy ſhells called *Cowries*, which paſt for money on the coaſt of *Africa*; and afterwards to china-ware, probably from an opinion that it might be compoſed of them.

This fine manufacture is of ſo long ſtanding

among

A sample page (vol. II, p. 204) from *Hau Kiou Choaan* showing Percy's lengthy footnotes

(See footnote 69 in Chapter Four for more details)



MISCELLANEOUS
PIECES
Relating to the
CHINESE.
VOL I.

物
格
知
至

ve, ki, chi, chi.
Omnia explorare intellectum perficit
Confucius.

LONDON:
Printed for R. and J. Dodsley in Pall-mall.
MDCCLXII.

The title page of *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese*

(See footnote 75 in Chapter Four for more details)

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